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Netanyahu: Opposition couldn't run a grocery store

EVELYN GORDON

PRIME Minister Binyamin Netanyahu exploded at opposition MKs yesterday, saying they were not fit to run a corner grocery, much less an economy.

"Who are you to talk?" he shouted, when they began heckling him about breaking his promise not to raise taxes. "You aren't capable of running a corner grocery! If you were running a business of mine, you wouldn't last a day!"

The outburst came not in the context of the budget debate, but during Netanyahu's response to several motions for the agenda marking 30 years of Golan Heights settlement, which took place during a break in the budget discussions. As he began his speech, Yossi Sarid (Meretz) called out that Netanyahu should "lend weight to his words by saying 'read my lips'."

Netanyahu exploded, saying the entire budgetary mess was caused by the huge deficit he inherited from the previous Labor-Meretz government.

"We said we would cut, and we did," he said. "But where were you when this deficit was ballooning? Why didn't you cut? Why didn't you act? Mr. [former] Finance Minister [Avraham Shohat], what were you doing while this deficit was swelling? Where was your function?" Instead of cutting expenses, Netanyahu said, Labor signed excessively generous wage agreements which inflated public-sector expenditures.

"And you dare to snipe at me? With that kind of economy, with those [wage] agreements, you can talk?" he said. "Who are you to talk?"

"The facts are unpleasant, but what are you going to do? When I see an economy that in 1992 had no [balance of payments] deficit— even had a surplus in its coffers— and then in 1996 we received an economy with a \$5.4 billion [balance of payments] deficit... You have no right to say a word: You should just shut up," he continued. "The nerve of this opposition! It controlled the government and brought about the biggest deficit in the history of the state. Yet they continue to talk!" he added.

"Do you know what it means to run anything economic? We said we would cut, and we cut... You

(Continued on Page 9)



Security forces evict an Israeli man from an empty Hebron house yesterday after a group of settlers had occupied houses in an attempt to complicate the redeployment in the city. (AP)

Hizbullah footage shows bomb attack

DAVID RUDGE

THE IDF imposed a curfew on Markabeh village inside the security zone yesterday, according to reports from Lebanon, and several residents were allegedly detained for questioning following Tuesday's roadside bomb attack in which two soldiers from the elite Egoz unit were killed and two others seriously wounded.

The reported curfew and arrest of some residents coincided with the release by Hizbullah of video footage of the attack itself. The film, apparently taken from a distance, shows the soldiers walking through a narrow street in Markabeh when an explosive device is detonated alongside those leading the unit. The video footage, screened on television here yesterday, shows the soldiers who were hit falling to the ground following the huge blast which raised a pall of black smoke.

It appears from the film that the explosive device, which was apparently operated by remote control, was hidden in rocks lining

the narrow street. The film also shows other members of the unit running to the aid of their fallen comrades and the subsequent evacuation of the casualties by IAF helicopter.

According to military sources, the fact that a cameraman was there at the scene clearly indicates that the bombers had local assistance, that they knew the route the soldiers would take and that the attack had been carefully planned beforehand.

Reports from Lebanon said IDF troops carried out widespread searches in the area of Markabeh, a Shi'ite village with a population of around 1,000 residents, which has been the scene of attacks against IDF and South Lebanese Army targets in the past.

OC Northern Command Maj-Gen. Amiram Levine visited the wounded in Haifa's Rambam Hospital. They are both in intensive care units following operations and their conditions yesterday. (Continued on Page 9)

Police, settlers clash in Hebron

HERB KEINON

THREE firebombs were thrown at IDF targets in Hebron and 17 Jews were arrested after moving into two different properties in the casbah, as tension in the city rose considerably yesterday with redeployment imminent.

The IDF spokesman said that one petrol bomb was thrown at an IDF outpost near Beit Hadassah and two others at IDF patrols at Police Square in the center of Hebron. No injuries were reported, and five Palestinians also were arrested.

The firebombs were thrown in an area near where three others were thrown on Sunday. The IDF had clamped a curfew on the casbah following Sunday's incidents. That curfew was lifted on Tuesday.

Earlier in the day, a confrontation between police and settlers broke out after some 30 demonstrators were removed from two buildings they tried to move into in the casbah. All those arrested in that confrontation were released by last night.

Hebron settlement leaders accused the police of brutality in arresting people after they had already left the properties in the casbah. Boaz Goldenberg, spokesman for the Samaria and Judea police district, dismissed the claims, saying the police "acted firmly but not aggressively." Relations between the police and Hebron's Jews have been especially tense since settlement leader Noam Arnon's arrest on Shabbat earlier this month.

Early in the morning a group of settlers moved into the building that once housed the Magen Avot synagogue, and another group moved into an abandoned building

that is being renovated by the Palestinians near the Avraham Avinu compound. In addition, a number of settlers, including children, went onto rooftops in the casbah and unfurled Israeli flags.

The demonstrators were given prior instructions not to resist arrest, and their removal from the buildings and the rooftops was done with relative ease and little confrontation with the police. The confrontations took place after the buildings were cleared.

Hebron settlement spokesman David Wilder said the protest was designed to focus attention on these issues.

"The move into Magen Avot was to show that old Jewish property is being transferred to Arafat, and all we will be able to keep are the areas where we are living now," he said.

"The move into homes being renovated by the Palestinians right next to Avraham Avinu was meant to show the proximity between these homes— currently abandoned but being renovated by the Palestinians— and the Avraham Avinu complex, Wilder said.

He said that the settlement is trying to pressure the IDF to stop the Palestinians from renovating these homes, which at some points almost touch the homes in the Avraham Avinu complex.

"If we don't stop the building now, before people begin moving in, it will be much more difficult to stop. Can you picture [Prime Minister] Binyamin Netanyahu evicting Arabs from these homes once they move in?" he asked.

The IDF yesterday also arrested six Palestinians for building without a permit in the casbah. (Continued on Page 9)

Multi-sector strike to hit flights, Bezeq, railways

A multi-sector, Histadrut-organized strike begins this morning and will disrupt transport and telephone services for most of the day.

- Both El Al and Airport Authority staff will strike at Ben Gurion from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. Passengers are advised to telephone their airline before traveling to the airport.
 - Bezeq services will be affected from 6 a.m. There will be no repair, 144, 188 and 199 services.
 - The Ports Authority faces strike action from 6 a.m. Haifa, Ashdod and Eilat ports will all be closed.
 - While passenger trains will operate as normal today, there will be no freight services from 6 a.m.
- Further disruptions are expected to banks and railways tomorrow, with a general strike scheduled for Tuesday. *David Harris*
Full story, Page 12

Jordan spins web of spies on the Internet

TOM GROSS

IN what it calls "a new policy of openness," the Jordanian intelligence service has set up a series of English-language pages on the Internet.

"We are extremely pleased to be hooked on to the Internet and sincerely hope that we will be of service to you," says General Intelligence Department Director Sameeh Badr Al-Din Al-Butrikhy, on one of the pages. "We have adapted a new policy of openness which we believe will better enhance our ability to serve our people."

Under the heading "A welcoming note from the director of GID," written in colorful green type, the GID home page declares that the GID has proudly been in service for the past 32 years. Throughout this period, the focus of its efforts has been on intelligence gathering and analysis with regard to issues concerning Jordan and the Middle East.

"We consider our intelligence department to be progressive, flexible, dynamic and keenly aware of its responsibilities and duties— internally and externally."

However, the spy service is not quite ready to share all its secrets. "Naturally," the director's note continues, "due to the nature of our work, there exist certain restraints upon the type of information that we will be able to provide through this medium."

One of the GID's pages in the "Topics and Views" section is headed "Terrorism." Noting that "His Majesty King Abdullah, the founder of the Hashemite Kingdom

of Jordan, was himself a victim of a terrorist act" and that "two formidable Jordanian Prime Ministers (Haza'a Al-Majali and Wasfi Tell) were also brutally murdered by terrorists," it informs us that in its effort to combat terrorism the GID "has made great efforts to strengthen its ties with the various foreign intelligence agencies so that the exchange of vital intelligence information may not be interrupted or impeded in any way."

There is information on 24 Jordanian political parties, ranging from the Jordanian Peace Party, which it says was set up in July 1996 and "strongly supports the peace process with the State of Israel," to Islamic and Communist parties, one allied to the Iraqi Ba'ath Party and another which "has the same political philosophy as that of George Habash's Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine."

The Internet service is the first such project in the Arab world and

provides us with many tantalizing tidbits. Still, it is for the most part lacking in concrete details. It gives no details about GID headquarters, which are believed to be in western Amman, and fails to tell us that it is an organization whose power over the lives of ordinary Jordanians extends to vetting passport applications.

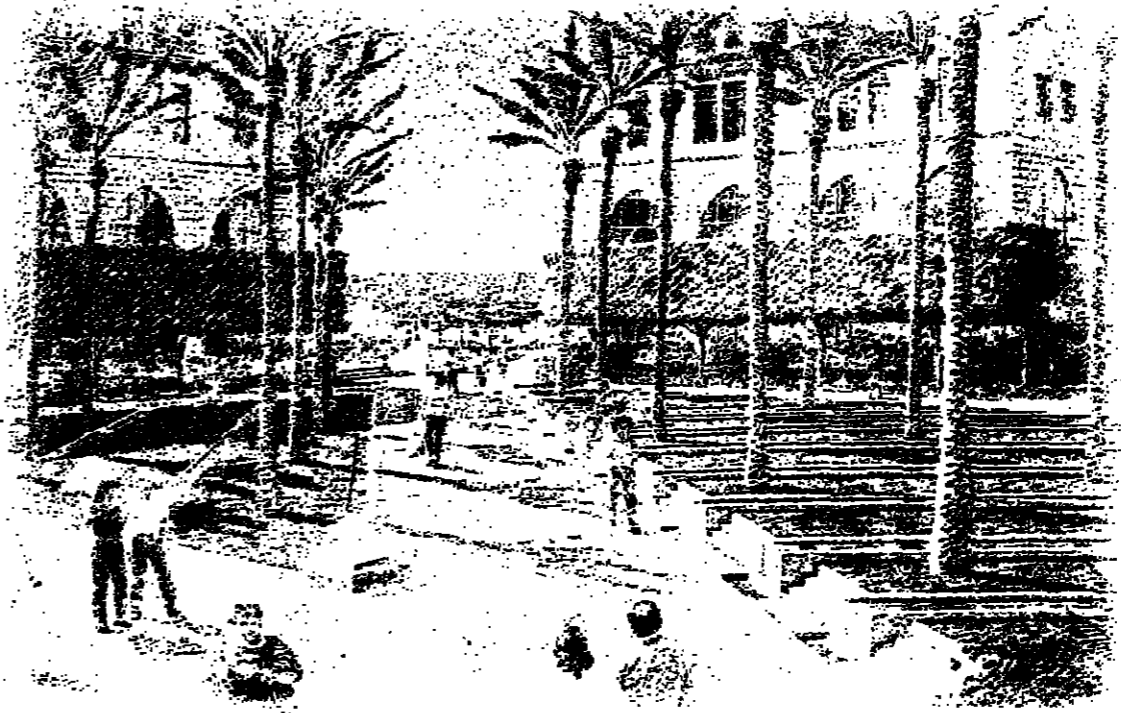
The GID also invites browsers to E-mail its agents. However, before revealing too much about themselves in any E-mail, would-be sleuths may wish to consider Joseph Conrad's dictum— "A man's most open actions have a secret side to them," since the GID could use the Internet to gather information as much as to disseminate it.

The IDF Spokesman said it was aware of the new GID web site. "The IDF is currently undertaking staff work concerning its entry into the Internet," an official at the office said.

The GID home page is <http://www.arab.net/gid>

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NRP threatens to vote against Hebron pact

THE National Religious Party is still threatening to vote against the Hebron agreement, even after a meeting with Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu in the Knesset yesterday.

NRP faction chairman Hanaan Porat said: "I'm convinced the prime minister is in a distressing situation. He himself sees this agreement as a poor one and is convinced that it is the best he could have achieved under the existing constraints."

"We believe this agreement doesn't ensure the safety of the Jewish residents in Hebron. The main artery of life, the Shuhada-King David Road, is likely to become the artery of residents' blood. Therefore, there is no doubt that we have to vote against it."

LIAT COLLINS

Education Minister Zevulun Hammer (NRP) would not say what he had demanded of the prime minister understood our situation.

MK David Re'em (Likud) is demanding the prime minister convene the Likud central committee to discuss and vote on the Hebron redeployment before it is signed. He said Likud activists are "confused" and "needed to be consulted on such an issue of principle."

Meanwhile, other coalition MKs are threatening to vote against Netanyahu in the no-confidence motion filed by Moleket over the Hebron agreement. MK

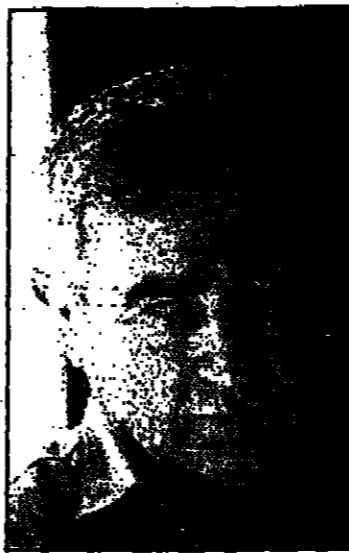
Michael Kleiner (Gesher-Likud) said he would vote no-confidence unless the agreement is brought before the Knesset, so that all MKs can express their opinion in a vote "on a national issue of such magnitude."

Isomet leader, Agriculture and Environment Minister Raphael Eitan, met the prime minister and met with his own MKs, but has not decided how he will vote yet.

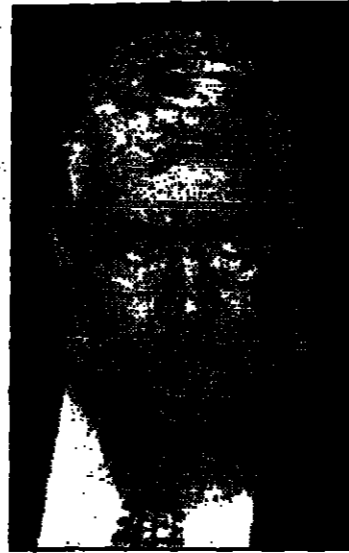
A party spokesman said Tsomet is waiting to hear more details and see maps before it makes its final decision.

The spokesman said the prime minister had assured Eitan that the Jewish residents' safety has been provided for but did not bring maps or provide many details at the meeting.

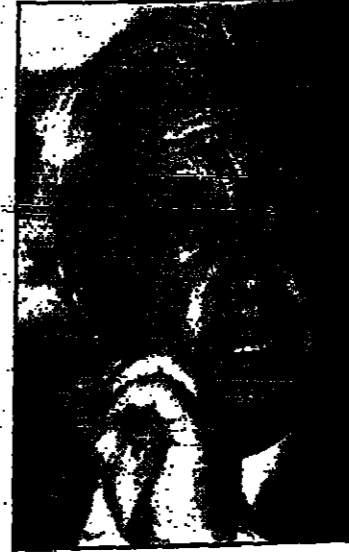
The four most likely to vote against Hebron pact



Zevulun Hammer (NRP) (Jerusalem)



Yitzhak Levy (NRP) (Kfar Saba)



Ariel Sharon (Likud)



Ze'ev Begin (Likud)

Yes, no, and maybe on Hebron

OF the 18 members in Binyamin Netanyahu's cabinet, he can probably count on 11 votes for his deal on Hebron. He knows that four will oppose it strenuously and he is not sure about the other three.

The opponents: Ze'ev Begin (Likud) called the agreement the "first step in the creation of a Palestinian state. If we give in on Hebron, who can guarantee that we won't capitulate elsewhere and reward Arafat for terror and violations of the agreement?"

Ariel Sharon (Likud) informed the prime minister he will lead a campaign to bring changes in what he says is "a deal that endangers the lives of Israelis."

Zevulun Hammer (NRP) reported

ed yesterday his faction was "shown maps and we did not like what we saw." His party won many settlers' votes and he cannot turn his back on them.

Yitzhak Levy (NRP) predicted yesterday that his faction will oppose the deal "because unless we are given hard evidence to the contrary, it is inimical to the continued Jewish presence in Hebron and to unhindered access to one of Judaism's holiest sites."

The "maybes": Rafael Eitan (Tsomet) is reported to be pulling away from his previously support for the deal, but despite his close coordination

with the NRP will not automatically vote with its ministers. "I will have to be convinced that this agreement poses no danger to Jewish life," he said.

Yuli Edelstein (Yisrael Ba'aliya) said he will oppose the deal "if it endangers Hebron's Jews and leaves them at the mercy of Arab mobs." However, he may be convinced otherwise.

Natan Sharansky (Yisrael Ba'aliya) will either support the agreement or abstain. He is not enthusiastic about it, but not vehemently against.

The supporters: Netanyahu himself, Yitzhak

Mordechai, Dan Meridor and Moshe Katsav (Likud) David Levy (Gesher) Avigdor Kahalani (Third Way) the takeover supporters Eli Suissa and Eli Yishai (Shas) Yehoshua Matza and Tami Hanegbi (Likud) would have been more troublesome had it not been for their personal loyalty to Netanyahu.

and the reluctant supporters: Limor Livnat (Likud) will say yes in the end but not easily. Right now, she is protesting about the ministers being left in the dark and says she will support the deal "only if assured that it will not put at risk the Jewish community in Hebron and if it will make possible its future development."

Ross flies home, but will return soon to seal agreement

US SPECIAL Middle East peace coordinator Dennis Ross flew home last night, but a US official said Ross "is likely to return here on Monday to wrap up the [Hebron pullback] agreement."

As it stands now, Israeli and Palestinian negotiators are dealing with more technical issues of drafting, rather than conceptual, political issues requiring Ross' attention in dealing with Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu and Palestinian Authority leader Yasser Arafat.

"Ross will be reporting to President Clinton on the significant progress made," a US official said last night. US ambassador

DAVID MAKOVSKY

Martin Indyk joined negotiations yesterday, having cut short a scheduled end of year vacation.

Meanwhile, PA Justice Minister Freikh Abu Medein reportedly said yesterday that he expected Israel to release all Palestinian women prisoners.

Israel had held up the release of four women, who were convicted for being accomplices to murders. In solidarity with the four, 25 other Palestinian women prisoners refused release.

In the past, President Ezer Weizman refused to commute the sentences of two of the women

prisoners who fall under his jurisdiction. Weizman, however, has subsequently signed the relevant papers, as has OC Central Command Maj-Gen. Uzi Dayan, who has jurisdiction over the other two women. Now, the decision to release the four is solely in the hand of Netanyahu.

It remains unclear if Netanyahu promised the release of the four during his meeting with Arafat in Gaza Tuesday. Timed to coincide with the meeting, Israel made the gesture of reopening the Islamic College in Hebron.

Officials were not available last night to confirm Abu Medein's statement.

Netanyahu: Syrians should show they mean peace

PRIME Minister Binyamin Netanyahu told the Knesset yesterday that if Syria's intentions are peaceful, it must prove it by stopping terror attacks on Israeli forces in Lebanon.

"The prime minister made a special address to the plenum, taking a break from the Economic Arrangement Law, to open the events marking 30 years of the settlement on the Golan Heights.

After a 15-minute unplanned exchange with the opposition on budget-related issues, Netanyahu answered several motions to the agenda on the Golan Heights and noted the deaths of IDF soldiers there Tuesday.

"It's clear to us that you can't reconcile this attack via [Syria's] proxies in Lebanon with its declarations that its intentions are peaceful. If Syria's intentions are peaceful, it must prove that its actions are in line with its declarations."

"Syria until now has not halted terror elements and I believe it must change directions if it wants us to take its declarations of peace seriously. The first step to build Israeli confidence in Syria is for it to do something we know it can do - stop the terror attacks in Lebanon against Israel. We believe that if Syria is seeking peace it will do that," he said.

Netanyahu stressed that Israel sees the Golan Heights as essential, not just for security but also for its water supplies. In recent

LIAT COLLINS

weeks the tension on the Syrian-Israeli border has decreased, he said. "We believe if Syria is looking for peace they'll make it and they'll find us partners, not automatic partners to their every demand, not partners to their every outlook or necessarily the outlook of previous governments. We reserve our own policies and stands."

"I think the negotiations we will hold will be difficult, but the recognition of the importance of peace with Syria can't conceivably cause us to agree to peace at any price. This type of peace - one which does not supply Israel's basic needs and our security and water needs - is the recipe for a continued dispute. I have no doubt that we will achieve the aim of peace with Syria within this term of office," Netanyahu said.

Although he made no promises from the plenum, he warmly praised the residents.

Third Way faction chairman Yehuda Harel, whose party was created largely in response to threats of withdrawal from the Golan Heights, tried to make the event as festive as possible, but was interrupted by heckling Arab party MKs.

He said the Golan Heights was desolate until Israel took over, and stressed that the government is committed to staying on the Golan Heights. As he walked way

from the podium, MK Tamar Gozansky (Hadash) called after him "Aliens, aliens," implying that he is living in a different world.

MK Haim Oron (Meretz) in his motion said peace with Syria is not possible unless the government adopts Yitzhak Rabin's formula that the extent of the peace should determine the extent of the withdrawal. He said there is a conflict between those who believe in settlement at any price and those who think that everything is open to negotiation.

In a meeting with Golan Heights residents, Knesset Speaker Dan Tichon said he hopes the Knesset will also celebrate 50 years of settlement on the Golan Heights. Tichon said he is proud of the Golan Heights communities and deeds and said the majority of the Knesset supports a continued presence on the Golan Heights under Israeli sovereignty.

Golan Heights Residents Council Chairman Avi Zeira said in response to Netanyahu's speech that the prime minister "had strengthened the Golan residents at the opening of the 30 years celebrations. Unlike in Hebron, there is no signed agreement with Syria and therefore the negotiations must be renewed without preconditions. We are sure the negotiations will be according to the basic guidelines of the present government and trust the prime minister."

Rabbi MEIR GORDON

Our beloved husband, father, and great-grandfather passed away peacefully on December 25, 1996.

Deeply mourned by:

Wife: Ruth Daughters: Zeva, Nava and Tamrah Son-in-law, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

The funeral will be held this afternoon, December 26, 1996, at 3 p.m. at Netanya Cemetery, Shikun Vatikim.

Shiva will be held at 52/3 Sderot Nordau, Tel Aviv.

For further details phone 03-546-6994.

Bus will leave Binyanei Ha'uma at 1 p.m.

Israelis join Palestinians for Christmas festivities

SOME 200 Israelis joined thousands of Palestinians at Shepherd's Field in Beit Sahur for the traditional Christmas festivities there.

An a cappella choir from Jerusalem performed at the Greek Orthodox Church. Meretz MKs Walid Sadek and Anat Maor also attended.

The celebrations were complemented by dancing and at the end the participants declared their faith in "two peoples, two states, one future." Jon Immanuel

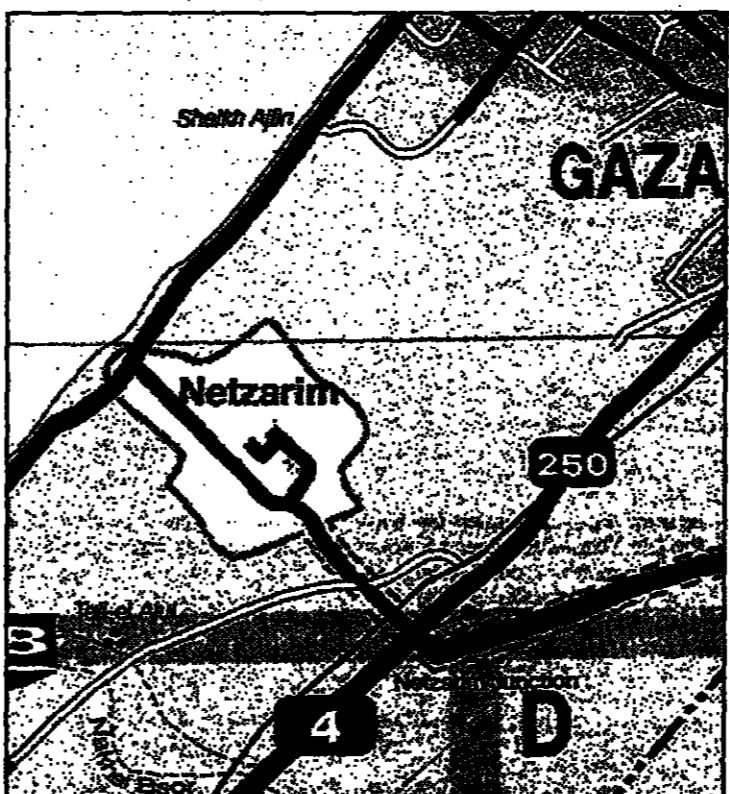
OTTO REINER

has passed away.

He bequeathed his body to science.

Shiva at the home of the deceased, 19 Derech Hayam, Haifa, Tel. 04-8384257, 04-8663113

The Bereaved Family: Eva Reiner Michael Reiner and Family



Netzarim residents oppose the opening to Palestinian traffic of the road that crosses their settlement.

Netzarim residents livid at road opening

HERB KEINON

NETZARIM residents, furious that a road that runs in front of the settlement will be open to Palestinian traffic beginning today, protested yesterday by not sending their children to school, not going to work, and not shipping out their agricultural products.

Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai ordered the opening of the road, which has been closed to Palestinians since a bomb killed three soldiers at the Netzarim Junction in 1994. Mordechai told Israel Radio that the opening of the road was a "gesture" to the Palestinians.

Shlomit Ziv, a Netzarim resident, said "they should not make gestures at our expense." Ziv said it is ridiculous to open the road at a time when all security personnel in the area say that the security situation has gotten worse, not better. "It is absurd," Ziv said. "You don't make gestures that endanger peoples' lives."

Echoing arguments Hebron's

Jews have used against the opening of Shuhada Street in Hebron. Ziv said that opening the Netzarim road will enable Palestinians to shoot at the settlement from passing cars.

The settlement's pre-school is 20 meters from the road, Ziv said. She said that during the riots in September following the opening of Western Wall Tunnel exit, Palestinians fired on Kfar Darom from the road in front of that settlement, and that a similar situation outside Netzarim is one of the settlement's fears.

Opening the road, which leads from the Netzarim Junction to the Mediterranean Sea, has been a Palestinian demand for months. Last month dozens of Palestinians blocked traffic at the Netzarim Junction to protest being barred from the road.

Netzarim settlement head Shlomo Kostiner went to the Knesset yesterday to lobby MKs in an attempt to reverse the decision to open the road.

Sharon urges mutiny against 'dangerous' pact

SARAH HONIG

NATIONAL Infrastructure Minister Ariel Sharon yesterday declared mutiny against Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's emerging deal on Hebron.

Sharon said he will seek to organize "a political front to amend the most dangerous aspects of the agreement on Hebron."

Sharon stressed he has no intention of resigning from the government. He listed his objections to the deal in a handwritten letter he gave Netanyahu as he was leaving for his meeting with Yasser Arafat Tuesday.

Sharon read portions of what he called his "personal letter" at a meeting with the NRP Knesset faction. The letter opens with a plea to Netanyahu to consider the dangers "at the last moment before you raise your hand against the very existence of Jews in Hebron."

Sharon identifies dangers like "the opening of the Shuhada Street, which leads to Beit Hadassah and Beit Schneerson. Even Shimon Peres refused to consider the opening of this street to free movement of Arab vehi-

cles." Netanyahu's second mistake, according to Sharon, is that he "relinquished Israel's right of hot pursuit and of freedom of preventive military action wherever and whenever need be."

Obviously smarting from the fact that Netanyahu did not consider his proposal to protect the Jewish community by erecting high walls to separate its dwellings from hostile neighbors, Sharon writes: "You deprived dozens of Jewish children in Tel Romsida of minimal protection by not building concrete walls."

Finally, Sharon protests that the prime minister will carry out further pullbacks after the Hebron redeployment.

Science Minister Ze'ev Binyamin Begin was no less stinging in his criticism. But he did evince some sympathy for Netanyahu, "who found himself in very dire straits when he took office. The architects of Oslo in the previous government, threw this present administration into the mire they had concocted, and now they gloat that we are getting dirty."

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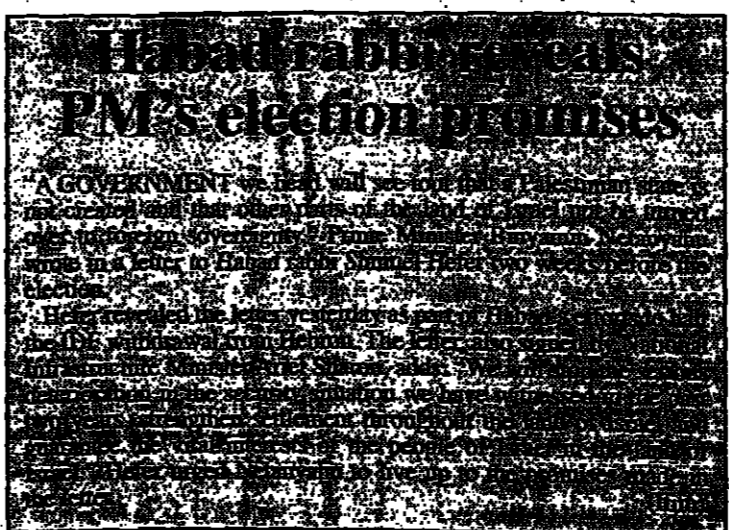
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Demonstration at Goldstein's grave postponed

THE Entire Generation Seeks Peace movement postponed its planned demonstration near the informed it of warnings it received of possible attacks on the group by militants. The organization said it



Three of St.-Sgt. Nir Gendelberg's comrades console each other during his funeral yesterday in Petah Tikva. (Ilan Osendriver/Israel Sun)

Egoz soldiers laid to rest

THE two soldiers from the elite Egoz unit killed in Tuesday's roadside bomb attack in southern Lebanon were buried yesterday.

St.-Sgt. Nir Gendelberg, 21, was buried in the military section of Petah Tikva's Segula Cemetery. He is survived by his grandfather, two grandmothers, his mother, father, and a sister. He was eulogized by author Amos Oz, a relative.

"Nir, our boy, we are not parting from you," Oz said. "You are not leaving us. You will go with us everywhere we go. You will be a part of everything we do. Every time we think, we will also think of you. You will be with us on every path we take - we are not separating from each other, Nir."

"You were such a lovely boy; warm, good. You loved to play basketball and we love you. You loved Hebrew songs, and we love you. You loved to volunteer - you volunteered to help absorb Ethiopians, you loved to go to the front lines, to serve in the toughest and most dangerous place. We were afraid, but we love you and will continue to love you."

"We will talk about the base and fanatic enemy who spilled your blood, but not today. [About] why you and your friends are still there, in Lebanon. We'll talk about it, but not today. Today we'll just say thanks, Nir, thanks for the days and nights, the courage, the dedication, the purity and steadfastness, and thanks to your friends who stand here around you. Thanks, boys, and thanks, Nir."

Capt. Yossi Levy was buried at the military cemetery in the Bnei Yehuda regional center on the Golan Heights. He is survived by his father, Dr. David Levy, his mother Anat, and two sisters.

OC Northern Command Maj.-Gen. Amiram Levine noted in his eulogy that Levy had an uncle who served in the same unit, and fell in the Yom Kippur War. "The nut [egoz] did not fall far from the tree," he said. Levine said that only the best fall in battle, because only they serve in the most dangerous units.

Golan Heights regional rabbi Yehoshua Herszkowitz noted how Yossi's father had accompanied him on several occasions to deliver bad news to bereaved parents, and had always tried to encourage

them, but was now on the receiving end of such encouragement.

Meanwhile, the IDF's chief medical officer, Brig.-Gen. Shuki Shemer, said yesterday the evacuation of the wounded to Haifa's Rambam Hospital had been carried out without incident.

At a press conference at the hospital attended by its spokesman and director, Shemer said the fact the wounded had been brought to the hospital from the helicopter landing pad by stretcher rather than by ambulance did not affect the treatment they received. "I can't say whether this was any worse than bringing them in by ambulance, and I am not certain that the process of bringing the wounded in from the pad to the emergency room by ambulance would have taken any less time."

According to the data presented at the press conference, the hospital was notified wounded were on the way at 1:57.

The helicopter landed at 2:03. The six minutes of warning time between the first notification and the landing of the helicopter did not allow for sending the ambulances to the landing pad, the three explained. (Iim)

Beersheba woman fined NIS 2,000 for biting policeman

EVELYN GORDON

LIMOR Barami, 23, of Beersheba, was ordered to pay NIS 2,000 yesterday by the Beersheba Magistrate's Court for biting a policeman in the hand during a fracas while her brother was being arrested.

Barami was accused of tearing the policeman's shirt and biting him at the Negev District police headquarters about three years ago.

Barami said she had seen her brother beaten by police at the station and her mother, who was with her, had been handcuffed for becoming violent.

She said she reacted "as his sister" and that the officer in question had choked her.

Judge Yosef Eliaz ordered Barami to pay the policeman NIS 500 for biting him and fined her NIS 1,500.

She was also sentenced to three months' suspended sentence. *Iim*

Ministry: 100,000 earn below minimum wage

EVELYN GORDON

THERE are about 100,000 people in Israel who earn less than the minimum wage, according to Labor Ministry data, Knesset State Control Committee chairman Ran Cohen (Meretz) said yesterday.

The committee was discussing a motion to ask State Comptroller Miriam Ben-Porat to prepare a study on the non-enforcement of the minimum wage laws. Yair Hurwitz, director-general of the State Comptroller's Office, said the office would consider the request.

Cohen said among those earning less than the minimum wage are women, Arabs and workers between the ages of 18-24.

Shlomo Shani, head of the Histadrut's trade union division, said more than 50 percent of those who should be getting the minimum wage are actually being paid less.

In some cases, this is because the desperate employee has agreed to those terms, he said. In other

cases, he said, the worker is simply cheated by his employer.

Shani suggested that a special fund be set up to help those who complain of exploitation since often people are afraid to protest for fear of losing what little income they have.

He also said Labor Ministry inspectors should be given wider powers and Histadrut representatives should be legally empowered to assist them.

Oren Karmi, head of the ministry's enforcement division, said the ministry is now in the process of training more inspectors and its current complement of 12 inspectors would increase to 21 once the course is finished.

However, he said, there is a problem of deterrence, since the ministry must often sue employers to levy a fine.

The ensuing legal battle not only takes a long time, but frequently results in laughably low fines, he said.

MKs come out in favor of satire

BATSHEVA TSUR

MEMBERS of the Knesset Education Committee seemed to be having a good laugh as they gathered yesterday for a rereading of Sunday night's *Cameri Quintet* satire program, which provoked negative reactions among certain sectors of the public, especially the religious.

The MKs were joined by Israel Broadcasting Authority chairperson Rina Shapira and director-general Motti Kirshenbaum, as well as other senior TV officials, including the program's director.

The government has reportedly decided to cut funding to the IBA under the current budget, partly because of such programs.

Committee chairman Emanuel Zissmann (Third Way), who convened the meeting, warned that Israel could turn into a dictatorship if its residents were muzzled.

"We have to take all steps to maintain freedom of speech and expression in Israel," he said.

"This meeting should not even have been held," retorted Ze'ev

Boim (Likud), adding that it was "in keeping with Jabotinsky's precepts to have satire. He said that people should learn to laugh."

Indeed, it appeared to be mere preaching to the converted.

But Gabi Butbul, a Shas representative on the IBA board, said that he knew of many people who had "thrown away their radios and even their televisions" in disgust.

Shapira explained that it is IBA policy to air satirical programs, "provided that they do not hurt any sector."

"We are a pluralistic society and there is a great deal of stand-up comedy talent here," she said. "The *Cameri* reacts to a certain facet of Israeli life and I would be happy if there were lots of different types of *Cameris*."

Butbul disagreed, saying, "all the satire does is create antagonism, instead of being a bridge between the different sectors of the population."

Former education minister Amnon Rubinstein said that the program is of an unusually high standard. "Satire always makes those who are its bums, feel angry," he said. "Former premiers [such as] the late Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres: constantly complained, but they would never have dreamed of trying to shut anyone up."

But the two skins which appear to have drawn the most fire - those dealing with minors - did not really come under the MKs' scrutiny.

In one, the prime minister's son - five-year-old Yair Netanyahu - speaks to his bodyguard about "shooting" a child in his kindergarten who has teased him. The second is a "nonsense genre" parody on local radio stations where explicit mention is made of sexual arousal among 12-year-olds.

MK Tzvi Weinberg (Yisrael Ba'alyia) questioned whether every subject is suitable for satire. But he said he was referring to a

satirical scene in which religious persons were shown getting money in a synagogue.

For the rest, the MKs were united in condemning all efforts to stop satire, which they agreed is a healthy phenomenon in society, and merely stated that "it should not include obscene words."

Kirshenbaum pointed out that the *Cameri* is one of the less expensive programs on the state-supervised channel, costing some NIS 7,000 per show. He said its standard is higher than that of the *Nikui Rosh* program he had directed 20 years earlier.

Referring specifically to the nonsense-genre skit, Kirshenbaum remarked: "In that case, the parody was toned down. If you listen to the actual language used in such programs, which are also heard by children, you will be amazed how tame it was."

In conclusion, Zissmann called on the government to ensure that the *Cameri Quintet* would continue to have an adequate budget.

Ben-Yair: No reason to prosecute professor for 'Hitler Youth' slur

EVELYN GORDON

THERE is no reason to open criminal proceedings against Prof. Moshe Zimmerman, who compared settlers' children to Hitler Youth, Attorney-General Michael Ben-Yair told the High Court of Justice yesterday.

Ben-Yair was responding to a petition by Eli and Yehoshua Shani, who wanted Zimmerman indicted for the remarks he made in an interview in April, 1995.

"Soldiers who volunteer for service in the territories are seen as

heroes, whereas this spirit of volunteerism should be compared to that of Germans who volunteered to serve in the SS," Zimmerman was quoted as saying. "There is an entire sector of Israeli society which I without hesitation term a copy of the Nazis. Look at the children of Hebron. They are exactly like Hitler Youth."

The Shanis demanded that

Zimmerman be tried for slander and/or sedition. However, Ben-Yair responded that this was not justified, given the great importance of freedom of expression.

The High Court has ruled before that comparing any segment of Israeli society to Nazis, though repugnant, is no different than any other repugnant statement, Ben-Yair said. Doing so does not merit

indictment unless the statement is almost certain to endanger public security or some other equally important value. Otherwise, he said, freedom of expression must be respected, and such statements should be dealt with in the public arena rather than the court.

In this case, Ben-Yair said, the widespread denunciation of Zimmerman's remarks from across the political and academic spectrum was a sufficient response.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Worker buried alive in collapse of building retaining wall

A Palestinian laborer was crushed to death yesterday when a retaining wall at the Har Haganaim cemetery in Jerusalem collapsed on him while he was working on it.

Mohammed Darwish, 22, from Lod, was working on a retaining wall and straightening out dirt under the retaining wall when it collapsed and buried him.

Police, firefighters and a Magen David Red Cross team arrived on the scene, but Darwish died before he could be rescued from the rubble. An investigation was launched by the Jerusalem Municipality, Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs.

Disabled youngsters' parents keeping them home in protest

Parents of 70 residents of Gederot in the West Bank announced yesterday that they are not sending their children to school because of the Gederot Local Council's failure to arrange and fund transportation to school for the children. The parents and children demonstrated in front of the local council building yesterday and plan to do so at the Education Ministry in Jerusalem today.

Jerusalem to open new technological college

A new technological college will open in Jerusalem in October 1998, Education Minister Ze'ev Elkin announced yesterday. Elkin said the college will be named after the late Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and will have 700 students. The college will initially have 700 students and will eventually have about 3,000. Classes will start in September 1998. The college will be located in the Gederot area.

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A woman lights a candle in front of the bombed Frankfurt church yesterday where three worshippers were killed at a Christmas Eve service by a woman who was an apparent suicide bomber. (AP)

Christmas eve bomber kills three at Frankfurt church

FRANKFURT (Reuters) - A suicide bomber with hand grenades strapped to her abdomen killed herself and two others at a Christmas Eve service in a crowded Frankfurt church.

German police said yesterday they believed the woman was deranged but had no clue to her motive.

Thirteen other worshippers, including a 12-year-old girl, were injured when the blast sent shrapnel, oily black smoke and bits of smashed pews flying through the Protestant church, police said.

The suspected bomber, about 30, arrived late and acted suspiciously before the blast tore her to pieces.

Police later published a photograph of her severed head, which bore her eyeglasses and an oddly serene look, in the hope that it would help identify her and find a possible motive.

"Based on the preliminary investigation, the suspect carried two grenades attached to her abdomen and detonated them," police

spokesman Manfred Feist told Reuters.

"We suspect this woman blew herself up, but we do not know anything about her motives," he said. "We can only speculate. Perhaps this was an emotionally disturbed person. We have largely ruled out this being a terrorist attack."

In other holiday tragedies, a boy born on Christmas Eve froze to death while his homeless mother wandered around Goettingen searching for shelter from the icy night, police said. A middle-aged couple died in a Berlin flat fire.

Churchgoers across Germany prayed for the bomb victims yesterday morning and for an end to all violence. "God came into the world to heal what man destroys," Munich's Roman Catholic Cardinal Friedrich Wetter told his congregation.

The two other dead women, 59 and 61 years old, were sitting near the bomber in a rear pew when the blast shook the small stone church in

the western Frankfurt suburb of Sindlingen at about 11.15 p.m. on Tuesday night.

One was killed immediately and the other died while being treated in the church, police said. Authorities said three of the 13 injured were in critical condition in the hospital.

A witness told police there had been a "muffled bang" at the rear of the church, which was packed with about 70 worshippers for the Christmas service. Panic broke out as people ran for the doors.

"I have no idea who could have done such a thing on a day like this," Frankfurt police chief Wolfhard Hoffmann told reporters at the scene. "We are completely baffled."

Police quoted worshippers as saying they did not recognize the bomber, who arrived late for the service.

Police said the grenades were of East European origin. Illegal arms dealers have large stocks of explosives and firearms from former Soviet forces based in East Germany.

Pope says Christmas marred by Holy Land tensions

VATICAN CITY (Reuters) - Pope John Paul II wished the world a happy Christmas in 55 languages yesterday, but said the spirit of the nativity was marred by tensions in the Holy Land and international indifference to the tragedy in Africa.

In his *Urbi et Orbi* ("to the city and the world") blessing and message, the 76-year-old Polish pontiff said Christmas meant not being resigned to violence and injustice, but striving to overcome hatred and rancor and returning to dialogue.

The pontiff spoke to thousands of people gathered under dark skies in a rainy St Peter's Square.

After the address, the Pope delivered brief Christmas greetings in 55 languages, including Arabic, Hebrew, Tamil, Latin and his native Polish, and in languages spoken in Burundi and Rwanda.

"The echo of the songs of Christmas must travel much farther," he said, speaking from the central balcony of Christendom's largest church. "It must resound beyond walls where the clash of arms is still heard, shattering the spell of peace."

The Pope, celebrating his 19th Christmas as leader of the world's

960 million Roman Catholics, said that while the past year had brought peace to Bosnia, Guatemala and elsewhere, it was sorely lacking in many other places.

"I am thinking of Bethlehem and all the Holy Land, where Jesus was born and lived: the land that he loved, the land where hope must not die, despite provocations and profound differences," he said.

The Pope expressed his concern over a slowing of the Middle East peace process in talks with Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat last week and is expected to meet Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu next month.

The pontiff dedicated an entire section of his address to the seemingly endless tragedy of central Africa. "And how can we forget Africa?" he asked. "At its very heart, in the region of the Great Lakes, this young continent is experiencing, amid the general indifference of the international community, one of the cruelest human tragedies of its history." The Pope, who has suffered from a series of health problems in recent years, celebrated a solemn midnight mass in St Peter's Basilica 12 hours before his *Urbi et Orbi* address.

Events conspiring against weakening Milosevic

BELGRADE (Reuters) - The harder Slobodan Milosevic tries to shore up the credibility of his socialist as a party ruler Serbia by popular consent, the more events conspire to prove him wrong.

Another fig leaf was peeled away on Tuesday when the Socialist Party (SPS) rallied only 40,000 supporters in Belgrade, under police protection, after boasting it would mobilize half a million.

The Zajedno (Together) coalition of opposition parties who have demonstrated for five weeks against SPS election fraud were supported on the streets of the capital by well over 200,000 people.

Every day, Zajedno leaders taunt Milosevic with the accusation that he rules a one-party state with stolen votes.

Despite fierce street battles between rival groups of demonstrators on Tuesday, the police treated even violent opposition protesters with unusual restraint.

Diplomats who have watched the SPS commit a series of blunders that strengthened Zajedno's support now believe Milosevic no longer has the resources to solve the crisis alone.

The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), which was given proof by Zajedno

that the November 17 local elections were rigged, may offer a last escape route.

It is expected to urge Milosevic to surrender control of Belgrade and 14 other big towns to Zajedno, even if he tries to regain them almost immediately through fresh elections.

The price will undoubtedly be concessions - press freedom and transparent election laws - that would herald the end of the socialist's 50-year monopoly of power.

Political sources said rejection of an OSCE compromise would push Serbia further into the uncharted waters where it is now adrift, even if Zajedno's talk of civil war is considered fanciful.

There is speculation for the first time that Milosevic's own future is endangered, with the possibility that SPS hardliners could sacrifice him to try to save their own power.

The parallel with Romanian dictator Nicolae Ceausescu, overthrown with his wife in 1989 has become increasingly apt in Belgrade.

The analogy needs to be kept in proportion but Milosevic and his unpopular Marxist wife Mira looked isolated on the platform of the SPS rally, surrounded by only a fraction of the promised turnout of party faithful.

Peru terrorists free another hostage after apparent concession

PERU called home its acting ambassador to Uruguay yesterday in apparent protest of Uruguay's release of two jailed comrades of the Tupac Amaru guerrillas who are holding more than 100 hostages in a diplomatic residence.

Although Uruguayan officials said their action had nothing to do with the hostage crisis, it was quickly followed by the release Tuesday evening of Ambassador Tabare Bocalandro, who was seized in the attack on the Japanese compound just over a week ago.

The recall was an apparent protest of the Uruguayans' release of the rebels, Lima's *El Comercio* newspaper reported.

Since the leftist Tupac Amaru rebels stormed the December 17 party at Ambassador Moribisa Aoki's home, they have released about 430 hostages; 105 people remain inside.

The rebels have demanded the release of about 300 jailed comrades. President Alberto Fujimori has refused to do so or to negotiate directly with the rebels.

The Uruguayan judge, Gervasio Guillot, insisted that his decision had nothing to do with Bocalandro's captivity.

In the Uruguayan capital of Montevideo, Interior Minister Didier Opretti also denied that his

country freed the rebels to obtain the liberation of the ambassador, but said, "this will undoubtedly make his situation easier."

Tupac Amaru rebels are also jailed in Bolivia, whose ambassador is one of six ambassadors held hostage. Malaysian Foreign Minister Abdullah Badawi left for Peru yesterday to try to win the release of its ambassador.

The rebels, who have called for an end to Fujimori's free-market reforms, say Peru's government has ignored the poor. The group has never had more than a tiny base.

They have kept a select group of hostages to use as bargaining tools. Two cabinet ministers, congressmen, police generals, Supreme Court members and Fujimori's brother are among those inside, along with several dozen Japanese businessmen.

In Moscow, Russian President Boris Yeltsin proposed yesterday that the G-7 group of leading industrialized nations and Russia send antiterrorist forces in to free the captives. No Russians are known to be held.

Japan repeatedly has stressed its desire that the safety of the hostages inside the compound, which is technically Japanese ter-

ritory, receive top priority.

Peruvians held candles high yesterday and prayed outside the compound. The Red Cross tried to raise the spirits of the captives with Christmas cake and hot chocolate.

Families of the captives gathered behind yellow police tape a couple of blocks from the state home. Edith Romero and her five children, ages 2 to 22, arrived with a placard that read: "Father. Have faith. We're with you."

"Please respect their lives. They're fathers like you," Romero, the wife of police commander and hostage Luis Valencia, said in an appeal to the guerrillas.

The Uruguayan ambassador was released as Red Cross workers delivered Christmas Eve dinner to the remaining hostages.

Fujimori sent a message to Pope John Paul II, thanking him for publicly condemning the "cruel and immoral" methods used by the guerrillas.

Rebels freed 225 hostages Sunday in what they said was a "Christmas gesture," although cramped conditions and the sheer number of people in the home had probably made the situation difficult to control. Authorities have cut off water, electricity and phone service to the residence. (AP)

Zaireans stuck in rebel-held Goma pray for peace

GOMA, Zaire (Reuters) - Christmas prayers for peace held a special poignancy for civilians in rebel-held eastern Zaire, where they fear a successful counter-offensive by the Zairean army.

The Roman Catholic cathedral in Goma, the largest city taken by rebels, was packed with hundreds of worshippers for a "midnight" mass, which ended three hours early because of security concerns.

"What can we do but pray? We have nowhere to run to if the army comes back here," said Justin Bijiga, voicing widespread fears that a successful Zairean army counter-offensive might be imminent following the return of President Mobutu Sese Seko.

Nervous Goma residents streamed quickly into the night towards their homes from the incense-filled hall of the cathedral, made from black lava stone.

Told rebel leader Laurent Kabila told Reuters yesterday a Zairean counter-offensive had been beaten back and his Alliance of

Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire had seized the town of Bunia, 360 km north of Goma.

The rebels have previously exaggerated claims to have taken several towns including Bunia, but Kabila said his report was correct this time. No independent confirmation was available.

"People are scared because they have been under Mobutu for so long. But for many this is the first peaceful Christmas they have known in their lifetimes," said Kabila, an opponent of Mobutu since the 1960s.

Mobutu's return to Zaire last week after four months in Europe convalescing after cancer surgery prompted hundreds of people to flee Goma, doubtful of the rebels' power to defend them.

The rebels have seized a swath of Zaire's eastern territory about 500 km long running from north to south since October, but doubts have arisen as to the durability of the alliance.

Yeltsin active on domestic, foreign fronts

MOSCOW (Reuters) - President Boris Yeltsin, in a burst of activity following his return to the Kremlin, yesterday promised Russians to tackle two major evils of the state and proposed an international force for a hostage crisis in Peru.

Yeltsin, 65, who returned to work on Monday after almost six months of absence due to heart illness and surgery, said in a radio address that wage and pension delays were the most painful problem for Russia. He also pledged to deal with abuses by state officials.

"The state's debt to the people is too high and the living standards are intolerably low," said Yeltsin.

Wage delays which amount to trillions of rubles (billions of dollars) have triggered labor protests, including a nationwide strike of coal miners.

Top military officials have warned that morale in the armed forces has sunk to a dangerously low point as most officers have not been paid since the summer.

Yeltsin said stern measures to stop massive tax evasion and impose strong state control over the sale of alcohol could provide funds to help solve the problem of wage delays.

He said widespread misuse of state funds by civil servants also badly affected the budget and added to the crisis.

"It's time to take measures against those who live living luxuriously at the state's expense, or to be more exact at the expense of ordinary people," Yeltsin said.

"Officials in charge will have to answer for wrongdoings. If someone is stealing he should go to jail, if someone is incompetent he should resign," he said.

He launched a surprise proposal later in the day by proposing that Russia and the Group of Seven rich nations join forces to help resolve the hostage crisis in Peru.

He suggested that a joint declaration of the "Group of Eight" - the G7 plus Russia - should offer "coordinated assistance in resolving the conflict including possible dispatch there of special antiterrorist squads from national security services."

If Peruvian President Alberto Fujimori agreed, special services of the eight countries should set up a joint group "with the aim of launching an operation to free the hostages."

Smelly cheese provokes Paris bomb alert

PARIS (Reuters) - A foreign airline steward who loved ripe French cheeses but could not stand their smell in his hotel room inadvertently provoked a bomb scare in Paris yesterday, police sources said.

The steward, in Paris on a stopover, had placed the cheeses in a large box on the window sill of his hotel room prior to flying home with his odoriferous purchase, the sources said.

Suspicious hotel personnel, alert for bombs after four people were killed and dozens wounded in a suspected Islamic fundamentalist blast on a Paris commuter train this month, spotted the box and alerted police sappers who pronounced the package tasty but harmless.

The daily newspaper *Le Figaro* meanwhile reported that a Sri Lankan who made a false bomb "discovery" in a Paris shop where he worked was in fact trying to earn the gratitude of authorities in order to qualify for French citizenship.

The employee was arrested last week for making false statements after he called police to the shop and showed them a crude device vaguely resembling bombs assembled by Algerian fundamentalists which he said had been left by four Algerians.

After the case was widely reported by the press, the Sri Lankan "disappeared" for a day and reappeared slightly wounded, claiming to have been abducted by Algerians seeking revenge.

Smelly cheese provokes Paris bomb alert

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15 killed, 38 hurt in Saudi bus crash

DUBAI (Reuters) - Six women and nine children were killed and 38 other passengers injured yesterday when a bus ran off the road in Saudi Arabia and overturned, a Saudi traffic official said.

The official said the accident occurred near the northern city of Arar in the early hours of the morning after the public transport bus crossed the border from Jordan.

No breakdown of the nationalities of the victims was available, but the official said the passengers were Saudis, Palestinians and Jordanians.

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A striking irrelevance

WHEN asked to explain the reason for today's sporadic strikes, and the threat of future industrial unrest, the Histadrut is not at a loss to provide a list of issues it opposes: The decision to cancel the half-point difference in assessing income-tax rates for men and women; the government's intention not to upgrade tax brackets in accordance with inflation over the next year; the trend in many industries towards ignoring collective labor agreements; plans for privatizing government-owned corporations. In fact, the list is so unfocused that it seems Amir Peretz's Histadrut has decided to fire in all directions simply for the sake of reminding the public it exists.

If anything, one would think that the Histadrut labor federation would be satisfied by some of the gains the social caucus in the Knesset attained in the debate over the budget—the government did, after all, cave in to pressure and canceled its plans to abolish universal child allowances or introduce payments for routine visits to physicians. The fact that the Histadrut did not declare a full, nationwide strike—an act which would place it at the center of attention—indicates that Histadrut leaders understand that they really do not have any good reasons for striking, other than their own sense that they should “do something.”

Simply put, the Histadrut, still in shock from its prolonged and continuing demise, is desperately seeking a relevant role for itself in a changed Israeli society. Unfortunately its leadership appears incapable of letting go of outmoded ideas, thus only increasing its irrelevance.

The original conception of the Histadrut's role, as envisioned by David Ben-Gurion in the 1920s, in which the Histadrut would be the center-piece of a completely labor-owned and managed economy, was outdated by the time the state was established. By the late 1970s most Israelis regarded the Histadrut mainly as a source-of-medical coverage and services. Despite clear signs in the Eighties that the worldwide trend toward economic globalization and integration could not bypass Israel, given this country's turn towards an economy based on high-tech, the Histadrut's leadership continued to ignore its growing problems and debts.

The full extent of the dissonance between the Histadrut's image of itself and reality was captured in the looks on the faces of the old guard after Haim Ramon's victory in the Histadrut elections of 1994. It was the look of people whose entire weltanschauung has collapsed around them.

Ramon embarked on a grand plan to downsize the Histadrut, selling large amounts of Histadrut-owned assets and ending its association with the Clalit health fund. Perhaps most

symbolic of the break with the past was the Histadrut's laying-off of many employees, reducing the credibility that the labor federation may have in future disputes over redundancies. The goal, in Ramon's words, was to create a “pure trade union,” but he left the task of deciding exactly what that means to his successor, Peretz.

The message that the Histadrut has chosen to convey, along with its Knesset allies in the social caucus, is one which has echoes in many parts of the world. It is mainly a message of concern expressed by those who fear that the nearly universally agreed-upon methods for attaining economic prosperity—global mobility of capital and labor accompanied by balanced government budgets—will leave them behind. Those advocating this message speak of the need to maintain compassionate societies, and in Israel they also appeal to traditional Jewish conceptions of compassion.

The union role which is usually implied by this view—striking for collectively increased salaries in all sectors, maintaining failing industrial plants and increasing government transfer payments—is highly debatable. On first thought, it might appear that such actions are necessary for maintaining people's welfare. But the truth is that in the long run, these actions actually harm the very workers they are meant to benefit. They are based on a static view in which a nation's wealth is fixed and one person's gains necessarily come at another's expense, in contrast to a dynamic view which takes into account what is needed to continually increase the living standards of all members of society.

Raised salaries, without accompanying increases in productivity, eventually lead to losses of export markets, deficits and inflation, while maintaining troubled industries is an invitation to never-ending subsidies. In an increasingly competitive world, a country which sticks to these policies will be left behind. Over the past few decades, increasing numbers of people throughout the world have come to understand these facts intuitively.

A public debate is needed to clarify what is meant by “a compassionate society” and what role the unions should play. A modern economy does not necessarily have to suffer from the income disparities of the US; there are other nations, such as the Asian “tigers”, which have managed to avoid the American excesses. As for the Histadrut, it has an important role to play in providing workers with legal protection, maintaining safety measures in the workplace, and preventing exploitation. Nobody wants a return to Dickensian conditions. But if the Histadrut takes actions which stand in the way of increasing economic prosperity, it will be doing the workers it represents the greatest possible disservice.



ILEG 96

Courage of his convictions

URI DAN
DENNIS EISENBERG

YOEL Tzur proved to the world that he is a man of rare courage and dignity who speaks with an incredibly disciplined calm. He proved that beyond all doubt as he stood at the graveside of his wife Etta and 12-year-old son Ephraim two weeks ago hours after they had been gunned to death by Arab terrorists near their Beit El home.

Instead of an emotional call for revenge in his hour of unbearable grief, Tzur's response was a Zionist one: “to build 1,000 apartments every time terrorists strike.”

All the more startling, therefore, was his dramatic reaction to Netanyahu's surrender to Arafat's demand that Israeli soldiers be forbidden the right of hot pursuit into PLO-controlled areas when the inevitable terrorist attack occurs against Jews.

Says Tzur: “To trust Arafat to deal with terrorists who escape to areas under his control is a death trap for Israelis in Hebron or anywhere else. Arafat is a problem for all of us, not just for Yoel Tzur and his bereaved family. He is making fools of us all. Putting our security in his hands has resulted in nearly 300 Israelis paying with their lives.”

“I am convinced that Arafat struck down the murderers who struck down my wife and child. How else could they have been arrested so quickly in Ramallah? Jibril Rajoub, Arafat's police chief, didn't have to search for them. He knew who they were. They were smuggled to Jericho through Israeli territory for a mock trial.”

“The tragedy of our army and security is that they probably knew too. There was nothing they could do. No wonder Rajoub boasts that the three killers will never be extradited to Israel. The entire affair is a distortion of the word justice.”

The writers of this column have learned from senior officials that while Israel has restricted Arafat's police force in Hebron to 100-200 “lightly-armed” policemen allowed in the vicinity of the Jewish community, Arafat has accumulated a store of over 2,000 illegal weapons (automatic rifles, submachine guns etc.) for their use.

There are 30 known murderers of Jews living in Arafat-controlled areas. Nominal requests by the Israeli authorities to extradite them have been ignored or rejected. Following the Beit El slayings Justice Minister Tzahi Hanegbi made noises about preparing documents requesting the extradition of the killers of Israelis. Nearly

all, if not all, are believed to be free after hasty “trials.” Some even serve in Arafat's police force or in other military bodies.

“What sort of punishment is that?” asks Tzur.

We have a question for the prime minister: If you were sincere in your condolences to the Tzur family at Beit El, why didn't

Most people would be bowed double by grief. But Yoel Tzur is rock-firm, ready for the next obstacle in the fight for the land

you insist on Arafat's handing over the 30 murderers in his hands before you agreed to the Hebron deployment? You owe that to the Tzur family, as well as to the families of all the other Israelis murdered by Palestinians.

We have learned that, prior to the Tzur killing, Israel intelligence gave the prime minister the names of PFLP killers operating in the Palestinian areas. Those names were passed on to the Palestinian Authority.

The dignity and serenity Yoel Tzur displays has aroused a wave of respect for him among Israelis. It reminds veterans of the way people in the kibbutzim and moshavim behaved in similar adverse times long before Israel became a state. His restrained speeches speech recalled other speeches made after other tragedies.

“We will continue to build up settlements. We will give Netanyahu the opportunity to live up to his promises. I believe we will ensure our destiny as Jews in this country.”

The fact of the matter, Tzur says, is that “there are hundreds upon hundreds, thousands like me, who think like me. We have sunk our roots in this country. We have had the strength to overcome obstacles in the past; we have the strength to overcome others in the future. I am not moving from Beit El.”

The writers are authors of *The Mossad: Secrets of the Israel Secret Service and other books on the Middle East.*

PICTURE POSTSCRIPT



This photo of a hap-happy young girl who won commendation honors in the “Wildlife Photographer of the Year” competition.

The contest was organized by British Gas, BBC Wildlife magazine and London's Natural History Museum.

(Photo by Wendy Shetlin and Bob Roznic/Rosner)

POSTSCRIPT

OTHERS MAY criticize, but Diana, Princess of Wales has let it be known she does not question her elder son's new interest in hunting. British animal rights supporters are fuming over reports that 14-year-old Prince William shot his

first stag while in Scotland with his daddy.

“The princess and Prince William have a very close relationship and she respects that he has interests in every arena and would not question them,” a

Diana aide said. Stalking and shooting wide-antlered stags that roam across Balmoral in northern Scotland is a favorite sport of British blue bloods, including Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip.

Gross insult

JERRY LEVINSON

YOUR facility, Mr. President, for off-the-cuff speech has endeared you to many Israelis. But your remarks last Friday to impressionable Haifa pupils about homosexuality were neither charming nor spontaneous. They were subversive and dangerous. And there was little comfort in your qualification that they reflected only your private sentiments.

I am a 40-something Jerusalem psychologist who made aliya 27 years ago. I served four years in fighting units of the IDF, am a combat veteran of two major wars, and continue to do reserve duty.

For four years I have shared my life with a Russian immigrant who recently completed his army service and is currently a graduate student in natural sciences.

You imply that our sexual orientation (and that of thousands of Israelis like us) is “abnormal” and must be dealt with by legislative and judicial means. I view this as a gross insult to my honor and humanity, as a deliberate attempt to delegitimize my life.

Allow me to correct a few misconceptions which reveal appalling ignorance on your part.

The concept of “normality,” for example. The question of how many gays and lesbians there are in the general community has often been raised. It is difficult to say accurately, since many are reluctant to come forward, fearing discrimination, rejection and persecution—the sort of thing you seem to advocate.

US surveys dating from the early '50s place the number of gays at between 3 and 10 percent of the general public. Most recently, 5 percent of Americans

Mr. President, your deliberate attempt to delegitimize my life warrants an apology

canvassed by the national Election Day exit poll identified themselves as gay or lesbian (probably a gross under-estimate).

There is no data for Israel. But there is no reason to assume that the figures differ significantly—which means some half-million Israelis are what you call “abnormal.” (In the '70s the American Psychiatric and Psychological Associations, whose authority is widely accepted here, determined that homosexuality is not socially deviant and removed it from their list of dysfunctions warranting treatment.)

You “don't like a man who wants to be a woman, and a woman who wants to be a man,” and you “can recognize one” when you see one. What you're talking about is transsexual, not homosexuality; and I doubt whether gays and lesbians are as easily identified as you think.

Many same-sex oriented persons behave just like anyone else, which is partly why they are the “invisible minority.” This helps protect them from stigmatization but invites isolation and solitude.

SEXUAL orientation isn't a matter of choice; it is usually determined at an early stage. The term “sexual preference” is thus inappropriate, and the relevant modern literature reports that attempts to change sexual orientation are often more harmful than beneficial.

Gradual disclosure to friends, relatives and trusted colleagues—“coming out of the closet”—is part of the process by which young gays and lesbians adjust to life in a largely homophobic environment. It's a way of coming to terms with themselves, their loved ones and their peers. Throughout they are in continual fear of rejection and belittlement, and the most tragic consequence of this is suicide.

The 1989 US Report of the Secretary's Task Force on Youth Suicide quoted independent studies estimating that up to 30 percent of youth suicides reported annually are committed by lesbians and gays; their risk of attempted suicide was two or three times greater than among “straight” youths. A recent Canadian study confirms these findings. A study here would probably show similar results.

The damage done, sir, by your remarks makes them not only unfortunate but unforgivable. You have not seen fit to offer a public apology; I venture to suggest that you think again.

The writer is a Jerusalem psychologist. From 1993-95 he supervised the gay, lesbian and bisexual youth support groups administered by the Tel Aviv-based Society for the Protection of Personal Rights.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

PRIVATE GATHERING

Sir, — In your edition of December 20, it was stated, in a caption of an unrelated photo, that Minister of Education Zevulun Hammer wrote to the president of the Hebrew University, condemning the placing of a Christmas tree in the lobby of the Law Faculty on Mt. Scopus.

It is quite amazing how a piece of information can get out of hand. The facts of the matter are that a small group of Christian Arab students asked for permission to hold a private, closed gathering in a room at the Law Faculty to mark Christmas. As part of this event, they asked if they could bring in a Christmas tree for the period of the gathering—some two hours in all.

As an institution which has always and will continue to practice non-discrimination in its acceptance of and relationship to students of all nations, races, ethnic groups and religions, the Hebrew University had no hesitation in granting the requests of these Christian students. Why anyone should find this objectionable is difficult to fathom.

JERRY BARACH,
Office of the Spokesperson,
The Hebrew University
Jerusalem.

CONSERVATIVE CONVERSIONS

Sir, — As reported on December 16 by Marilyn Henry and David Makovsky, the idea of changing Israeli law so as to exclude Masorti (Conservative) conversions performed in Israel is a political trick that won't work.

To discriminate “only” against our 20,000 Israeli members or the 50,000 participants in Masorti projects, youth groups, schools, congregations and study groups, not to mention hundred of thousands who support and encourage our traditional yet modern approach to Judaism, may indeed be the arithmetic of small-minded politicians. If they only count noses, then it may make some kind of diabolical sense to have the Jewish State recognize only Conservative conversions abroad since that constituency numbers two

million adherents throughout the world—a powerful force indeed. However, discrimination is discrimination and should we allow this to happen we shall all lose. The State of Israel will lose its moral base; the good name of Judaism will be sullied; and the delicate seam which holds our people together will be ripped asunder. Also, the article implied that the Conservative Movement might be considering performing conversions under the Palestinian Authority. Let me assure your readers that no such suggestion has ever reached my desk.

RABBI PHILIP SPECTER,
Executive Director,
The Masorti Movement
Jerusalem.

THE IRISH JEWISH MUSEUM

Sir, — Michal Yudelman's caustic criticism of Mrs. Sara Netanyahu during her recent visit to the Jewish Museum in Dublin (December 13) is misinformed. Commenting on Mrs. Netanyahu's remark that she was unaware that there was a Jewish museum in Ireland, Ms. Yudelman scoffed: “Maybe the prime minister's wife or his Foreign Ministry staff should see to it that she does know such things. Especially since Dublin gave Israel a president.

Friedman's bias in reporting on the Middle East, an opinion which I am entitled to express whenever I have the urge. Mr. Bar-Ilan seems to have forgotten which hat he was wearing when the *Forward* called, in case he forgot, it was definitely a *kova temberel*, and, therefore, he should have responded in a professional manner and kept his personal opinions to himself.

In your issue of December 12, Ruth Willers of Middlesex complains about a Zionist organization inviting a non-believer to address it. What rubbish! The ADL is not now, nor has it ever been, a

CONSERVATIVE CONVERSIONS

million adherents throughout the world—a powerful force indeed. However, discrimination is discrimination and should we allow this to happen we shall all lose. The State of Israel will lose its moral base; the good name of Judaism will be sullied; and the delicate seam which holds our people together will be ripped asunder. Also, the article implied that the Conservative Movement might be considering performing conversions under the Palestinian Authority. Let me assure your readers that no such suggestion has ever reached my desk.

RABBI PHILIP SPECTER,
Executive Director,
The Masorti Movement
Jerusalem.

THE IRISH JEWISH MUSEUM

Chaim Herzog. The museum was converted from a synagogue in honor of a 1977 homecoming state visit by President Herzog.”

I visited the Irish Jewish Museum last year and noted that it was opened by former President Herzog in 1985 when he paid a state visit to Ireland. Chaim Herzog was elected president of Israel in 1985.

JEAN KLOOS-FISHMAN
Beersheba.

Zionist organization. It is an American organization established to safeguard the civil and cultural status of Jews in America as it sees it.

This whole matter could be put to rest by Mr. Bar-Ilan apologizing to the ADL and making Mr. Friedman lead everyone in doing the Macarena at the ADL dinner dance. As for the ZOA, which started the whole silliness, I think that no one should call them, since they've been politically “out to lunch” (I'm allowed to say that) for years.

IRA GELNIK
Caesarea.

Handwritten signature: JAVICO 1350

Communications breakdown

DEAR RUTHIE
RUTHIE BLUM



DEAR Ruthie, My wife is always accusing me of not listening to her when she talks to me. I say she never gives me a chance. She is always on the phone with her women friends, or entertaining them in our home. She claims that if she and I had more to talk about, she wouldn't need to spend so much time with her friends. I don't think there is anything wrong with her having friends. But I do feel that she should stop blaming me for something she is causing. I am always glad to spend time with her. It is she who is constantly on the run. How can we reconcile this issue without it leading to something more serious?
In-Need-of-Help Husband
Ramat Gan

Dear Helpless Husband,
When a vicious cycle consumes a marriage, it is totally pointless to expend precious energy trying to figure out which partner set it in motion. It is far better to think of it as "spontaneous combustion," and then to work on breaking it. But for such a cycle to be broken, the real point of contention must first be identified. Then, a serious examination of whether this is something both of you wish to rectify must be undertaken.

The process of identification, however, is much more difficult than it sounds. Human beings have an uncanny mechanism which enables them to erect "screens" to block out precisely those things which require confronting. Once firmly in place, this screen allows in a only a "revised edition" of the problem. In the case of you and your wife, the issue of whether you "listen to her" may be a "revised edition" of a greater issue neither of you wishes to confront — that what she has to say doesn't interest you, and that you do not inspire in her the inclination to do any real talking.

Since examining this question might lead to uncomfortable conclusions about your marriage, each of you is engaged, instead, in finding excuses (i.e. placing blame) for not talking to one another at all. The good news is that often what we most fear confronting turns out to be less monu-

mental emotionally than our gut had anticipated. As a result, there is always room for optimism regarding our potential for change. If you and your wife can begin breaking your cycle by really talking about what is at the core of the lack of communication, you may even end up really listening to one another. You might even find it interesting and enjoyable.

Dear Ruthie,
My mother-in-law insults me in front of my children. Nothing I do is right (according to her). I can't cook properly, certainly not bake, I don't have a clean enough house, and I am not a good mother. She loves to refer to the wonderful way she raised my husband, and to "what a well-adjusted, happy" child he was (unlike mine, of course). It's making me miserable. I forgot to mention that my mother-in-law shares our two-family house, so there's not much point in trying to avoid her. My husband doesn't pay attention to her ramblings, and he tells me I should do as she does — shut out her noise. But I can't. What can I do?
Desperate Daughter-in-Law
Somewhere in Israel

Dear DD,
If availing your mother-in-law is out of the question, you must try to find a way internally to avoid her. This is probably how your husband manages to prevent his mother's "ramblings" from permeating his consciousness. The only way to achieve internal balance in relation to her is to examine and pinpoint the sensitive button she is pressing in you. To be sure, nobody likes to hear constant criticism. But, each of us has a different set of buttons which "set us off." Apparently, your mother-in-law keeps yours in a constant "on" position. If you are to live in such close proximity to her, you would do well to try and find the "off" switch.

One last point: You might also examine your own part in sharing a two-family home with someone who has such a negative effect on you.

Letters should be addressed to: 'Dear Ruthie,' POB 81, 91006 Jerusalem. For E-mail: editors@jpost.co.il

A wish comes true for little Ayman

LARRY DERFNER

AT 10, Ayman Yassin is a practical boy. He could have taken a ride in a fighter jet. He could have had a vacation with his family in Disneyland, Alaska, or anywhere on earth. He could have even met Bill Clinton. But he decided the thing he wanted more than anything else was a computer. So, late last month, he got a computer.

Yassin, who lives in Tamra, in Galilee, is Israel's first "Make-A-Wish" child. The Make-A-Wish Foundation, which began in the US in 1980, and is now in 15 countries, has granted one great wish each to tens of thousands of young people with terminal or life-threatening diseases.

Make-A-Wish found Ayman about a year-and-a-half ago. He was in an Oklahoma City hospital about to have a liver transplant; his condition was too urgent for him to wait until a suitable liver became available in Israel, said his father, Ahmed. The boy's surgeon, Dr. Eliezer Katz, a Jerusalem native, was familiar with the organization — it has 87 branches in the US — and told Ahmed that his son, unfortunately, was just the sort of youngster it was looking for.

Katz put in a call to the local Make-A-Wish office. Later he fixed Ayman up with a new liver. "Dr. Katz told me that if they hadn't found a donor that day, Ayman wouldn't have lasted more than a few hours," Ahmed said.

The family, which financed the trip to Oklahoma City with the help of donations (Ahmed is a maintenance man with the Tamra municipality and his wife, Johana, is a housewife), had to wait many months until Make-A-Wish started up its Israel office in Ra'anana. Local representatives Mervyn Trappler, and Avi and Denise Bar-Aharon went to Tamra to find out what sort of wish Ayman had in mind.

"We interview the whole family together, but afterwards we interview the child alone," explains Denise. "We want to make sure that the child is really asking for what he wants, not what his parents told him. If a three-year-old boy asks to go to Las Vegas, we have our doubts."

But Ayman really wanted a computer. This isn't unusual. Computers are the most popular item among children who wish to "have" something, says Trappler.

Besides to "have," there are three other types of wishes: To "go," to "meet," and to "be." Disneyland is by far the favorite place to go. Michael Jackson has been met by literally hundreds of Make-A-Wish children; Michael Jordan and Shaquille O'Neal are other frequent picks, and Presidents Reagan, Bush and Clinton have all received youngsters at the White House. Pilot, police officers and actor are among the most popular things to "be," says Trappler.

IN HIS living room, Ayman, surrounded by friends and relatives, was seated in front of the computer, dodging runaway trains and



Ayman with a representative of the Make-A-Wish Foundation tries out his new computer at home in Tamra. (Jonathan Bloom)

blowing away cowboys on the screen. He seemed shy, and preoccupied with his new machine, so the questions were brief: Who's the person you'd most like to meet? "Rambo."

The place you'd like to visit? "America." Anywhere in particular? "Oklahoma

City." What would you like to be? "A soccer player." Make-A-Wish goes to great lengths indeed. One boy wanted his own movie theater, so volunteers broke down a wall in his bedroom and installed a screen and projector, and even brought in a popcorn machine

and 'ice-cream cooler. Recently a swimming pool was built in a youngster's backyard.

There are some limits, of course. For instance, while a child can be flown anywhere he wants, he cannot have the airplane.

Granting the wish involves creativity and the cooperation of a lot of sympathetic people.

"A boy in San Francisco who had only a few weeks to live wanted to be in the navy, so he was dressed in a navy admiral's uniform and flown in a jet onto an aircraft carrier in San Francisco Harbor, and inducted into the navy on deck," says Trappler. "A few weeks later he was buried in his admiral's uniform, with military honors."

Another American boy, Trappler says, wanted to go up in a helicopter, but hospital doctors warned his mother that he might not survive the flight, and made her sign a release absolving the hospital of any responsibility. The helicopter took off from the hospital roof with the boy and his mother on board, and when it landed the boy was dead.

"People at the hospital asked the mother if she thought it was worth it," Trappler adds, "and she said, 'Yes — it was the best day of his life.'"

Quite a few Make-A-Wish children — who range in age from two-and-a-half to 18 — have extremely modest desires. "They spend all day lying in hospital beds, connected to tubes and monitors, and all they want to do is get out of the hospital — to take a drive, to go to a shopping mall," Trappler says.

Many die not long after their wish is granted. But many recover. "A lot of them say it was getting their wish that turned things around for them, that made them start fighting back," he says.

The organization is looking for volunteers to do fund-raising, to find companies and organizations that will donate products and services (Taldor Computer Systems of Ramat Gan donated Ayman's computer), to help "design" the fulfillment of wishes, and to assist in other ways. Anyone interested can phone the office at (09) 760-2850, or fax it at (09) 760-2851.

One other question was put to Ayman: Why did he want a computer? "So I can catch up with the schoolwork I miss," he replied. He misses an average of three days of class a month because Rambam Medical Center likes to run regular tests to keep an eye on how he's doing. Other than that, Ayman lives a normal life. "He's in excellent condition," says his father. "He plays soccer and runs around like all the other children. If you had seen the way he was, you wouldn't believe the way he is today."

With Ayman as its first recipient, Make-A-Wish is off to a lucky start in this country. Now the foundation is about to meet more Israeli children and hear their wishes, some of which are mighty urgent.

Guide to 'dangerous places' for fearless travelers

THERE it sits on the "Travel" shelf in your local bookstore. *The World's Most Dangerous Places*: a hefty, 1,000-page volume. It looks like a travel guide, but with that title it is some kind of joke?

No, not a joke at all, even if its emblem is a laughing offbeat guide, it is actually quite serious and surprisingly instructive and useful. More than 50,000 copies of the first edition, which appeared quietly a year ago, have been sold. The second edition (\$19.95), updated and including new material, has just been published.

The guide's aim is to provide travelers with an accurate and comprehensive look at the world's worst trouble spots. You can use it to stay out of these places — or if you must visit them, it could help you avoid hassles or even save your life. One fascinating section provides details on the tricky art of bribing your way out of minor traffic infractions, fake arrests or other tight spots. The book should be of special interest to business travelers, embassy workers, archeologists and foreign correspondents, whose jobs take them to the unlikeliest

places, and to adventurers, who pop in simply for the thrill of it. Brash, opinionated and dapperly witty, the guide cites these particular words:

The world's most dangerous place for foreigners these days is Algeria, where more than 100 foreigners have been killed since 1994. Their deaths are attributed to fundamentalist militants seeking to rid the country of non-Islamic influences.

The most dangerous form of travel in the world is "the fabled minibuses." In the Third World, the vehicles are used primarily "for rush-hour transportation of poor people," the guide says, and are "run by entrepreneurs who make their money by carrying as many people as many times as they can." The result is "a deadly driving style," endangering passengers and pedestrians alike.

Aboard Europe's trains, the threat of thievery is worst in Eastern Europe, especially on night trains. Thieves are known to inject sleeping gas into train compartments and then methodically rob passengers, the guide reports.

Banditry is "a very real danger" in parts of Kenya, Somalia, India, Cambodia, Pakistan, Burma and southern regions of Russia.

"Imagine a naked man walking down the street with \$100 bills taped to his body," the guide says. "That's what the typical tourist looks like to the residents of most Third World countries."

Business travel is more dangerous than adventure travel because "one becomes a target for most of the world's terrorists simply by representing a [foreign] company." As a business traveler, "you tend to frequent establishments and locations where thieves, terrorists and opportunists seek victims — luxury hotels, expensive restaurants, [expatriate] compounds, airports, embassies, etc."

The most dangerous flights are on local airlines in China, North Korea, Colombia, all countries in central Africa and all countries in the former Soviet Union. Flights inside India and through the Andes of South America also are risky.

DANGEROUS PLACES is the creation of Robert Young Pelton, a 41-year-old, Canadian-born adventurer, who, a few years back, purchased the Fielding Travel Guides series, which had become moribund. Since then, as publisher and chief executive officer, he has revitalized the

firm, aiming Fielding's 50 titles at younger, independent travelers in search of unusual adventures. "When I got into this business I tried to hire other writers to do the book," Pelton says, but "they told me I was crazy." So he decided to report and write it mostly on his own, plunging with his two colleagues and other contributors into the world's "messy places."

Along the way, Pelton and his crew have been "shot at, abused, scammed, beaten, blown up, sick, bored and bashed," he says. "But we don't reciprocate. We do not carry any firearms, and we do not harm, injure or kill people in our travels."

In Eastern Turkey recently, a Kurdish warlord suspected Pelton of being a spy for the Central Intelligence Agency, "and he wanted to shoot me," Pelton talked his way out of the threat by showing the warlord a copy of a Fielding guide "with my picture in it."

Sadly, the world seems to be growing less safe, although Pelton prefers to say simply that it is "staying different." The concept of war has changed, and rather than two conflicting forces, today's wars involve numerous

competing factions, including criminal factions. The world is "much, much more complex," he says. At the same time, faction leaders realize "that if you kidnap a tourist, you get a lot of ink. You grab one yuppie, and you read about it for six months. We have become pawns."

And yet much of the world remains safe, friendly and honest. "Have you ever gone to the house of a staff member of a luxury hotel? Pelton asks. "A maid in the Caribbean lives next to poverty. It's amazing that they don't steal things."

Pelton's guide divides the world's dangerous places into three broad categories: "Dangerous Places" — 32 countries, such as Afghanistan, Cambodia, India, Israel and Colombia, where wars or other possibly deadly conflicts are being waged; "Criminal Places" — seven countries, including the US, Haiti and Russia, where crime is a significant problem; and "Forbidden Places" — eight countries (Iran, Iraq and Libya among them) where it is illegal or politically incorrect for Americans to visit. Another 30 destinations, including Hong Kong, Panama and Macedonia,

are described as potential trouble spots in the months ahead.

Despite the dangers, Americans continue to travel to most of these destinations, both on business and on vacation. The heart of the book is its advice on how to avoid getting hassled, robbed, jailed, injured or killed along the way. Much of the information is not readily found elsewhere unless you have access to the US government's intelligence files.

In the chapter on Mexico, where crime against tourists is a problem, the guide names specific roads where highway banditry is a threat, and it notes that "tourists and foreign residents account for 70 percent of all criminal reports in downtown Mexico City." Terrorist activities in Eastern Turkey make travel to that part of the country hazardous; in Istanbul in the west, you might be slipped a drug if you frequent bars and nightclubs alone. Rio de Janeiro's beaches are the haunt of thieves, so leave valuables in your room. Bombay's train stations have been the target of bombs.

Does his book paint too gloomy a picture of international travel? It's a question Pelton has asked himself, and he has concluded, as

he writes, that "despite the concerted efforts of all these nations and groups to wreck your two weeks' vacation, most of the world's travelers will have little more to complain about than cold french fries and lumpy mattresses."

And which are the world's least dangerous places? The list is short and not at all surprising: Canada, the Caribbean, Costa Rica, Mongolia, New Zealand, the Pacific Islands, the Vatican, Switzerland, Australia, Iceland and Antarctica. Safe, yes, but Pelton lists them under the title "The World's Most Boring Places." It is an adventurer's point of view. (The Washington Post)

TORAT ERETZ YISRAEL



This book marks the first time that Rav Tzvi Yehuda Hacohen Kook's lectures have been translated into English. His teachings on Torah, *Eruvin*, *Ahava*, *Eretz Yisrael*, *Zionism*, the Holocaust, *Geula*, and the *Mashiach*, bring the encompassing Torah of *Eretz Yisrael* into unparalleled light. The book's commentary brings the reader into the *Beit Midrash* of Rabbi Kook, presenting an intimate understanding of his vision and the unique era of redemption which Rabbi Kook inspired the nation to see. Translated by Zvi Fishman. Hardcover, 387 pp. JP Price NIS 55.00 inc. VAT, packing and postage

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BUSINESS & FINANCE

Thursday, December 26, 1996

8



An Iraqi Christian woman prays in front of a crucifix at a church in Baghdad yesterday, thanking God for the flow of Iraqi oil to world markets, which means more food for her family. (AP)

New Japan budget stresses debt cut

TOKYO (Reuters) - Japan's cabinet yesterday endorsed a final state budget plan for the next fiscal year, with an emphasis on cutting debt rather than economic recovery. This is the first step towards improving our fiscal finances. We have established the 1997/98 state budget as the first year for carrying out fiscal reforms and have severely suppressed general spending and reduced bond issues by 4.3 trillion yen (NIS 100 billion), the government outline said. Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto has said that 1997/98 (April-March) will be the first year of fiscal reforms, in an overall plan to complete administrative reforms by 2001. The budget draft will be sent to the next regular session of the parliament, starting in January, for approval. The final plan sets a budget of 77.39 trillion yen for the fiscal year, up 3 percent from the original budget for 1996/97, which in turn was 5.8% larger than the original budget for 1995/96. Japan will issue 16.71 trillion yen of government bonds to help finance the budget, of which 7.47 trillion yen will be deficit-financing bonds and 9.24 trillion yen will be construction bonds. Deficit-financing bonds, unlike construction bonds used mainly for infrastructure projects, are issued to fund shortfalls of current administrative costs and need parliamentary approval. The ministry allocated a record 21.03 trillion yen of new government bonds in 1996/97, of which around 12 trillion yen were deficit-financing bonds. A government advisory panel

has urged the government to cut its annual fiscal deficit to below 3% of gross domestic product (GDP) by 2005, a target expected to be officially adopted. The Paris-based Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) expects Japan's fiscal deficit for calendar 1997 to be 6.3% of its GDP. Japan's nominal GDP stood at 488.5 trillion yen in the year to March, 1996. Tax revenues are estimated at 57.8 trillion yen in 1997/98, up 12.6% from this fiscal year's original budget. The big increase is mainly due to a rise in the consumption tax to 5% from 3% in April, an end to special income tax cuts from January and expected economic growth of 1.9% in fiscal 1997/98. On the expenditure side, the draft budget allocated 16.8 trillion yen for debt servicing, up 2.6% from the original 1996/97 budget. General spending, the core of the budget, will total 43.81 trillion yen, up 1.5% from the amount earmarked in the original 1996/97 budget, the lowest growth since 1989/90. Tokyo will raise defense spending by 2.1% to 4.95 trillion yen in 1997/98. Japan, the world's top aid donor, plans to increase funding for its official development assistance program by 2.1% to 1.17 trillion yen. Public works spending will grow only slightly, whereas in the past the government has spent large sums to help its economy recover from a slump that started with the bursting of the late 1980s "bubble economy" of inflated asset prices.

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Gov't, C&W mull joint control of Bezeq

THE Government and British telecommunications company Cable & Wireless are considering creating a controlling partnership in Bezeq through a jointly owned stake in the company, Communications Ministry spokeswoman Tal Sofer confirmed yesterday.

The statement was made in response to a report in the Globes financial daily, which said the joint stake would be a 20 percent interest in the company. This, however, is only one of a number of options being considered by the government in its ongoing negotiations with C&W.

C&W, which already holds a 10.02% share in Bezeq, has made clear its desire to extend its interests in the company in particular, and in Israel in general. This proposal was mooted during

DAVID HARRIS

ing a meeting last week between a C&W representative and Government Companies Authority director-general Tzipi Livni. That followed a recent meeting in London between Communications Minister Limor Livnat and C&W managing director Richard Brown. Brown is expected to make a return visit to Israel in the coming weeks to continue negotiations. While no one from C&W was available for comment yesterday due to the Christmas holiday, the company's Near East director Roy Polley and company spokesman Peter Eustus both said earlier this month negotiations would only take place behind closed doors and not through the media.

Bezeq will be one of the first state companies to be sold in 1997, according to the Prime Minister's Office deputy director-general with responsibility for privatization, Moshe Leon. An announcement on other companies to be sold is expected immediately after the Knesset passes the 1997 budget. Experience abroad has taught that flotations of national telecommunication companies are met with enthusiasm by equity investors and, in the longer run, help stimulate privatization processes. Based on this knowledge, and due to its already successful shedding of 23% of its shares in recent years, Bezeq is widely expected to be the locomotive for other privatization during the current government's term.

Tobacco divestment meets embarrassing obstacles

WASHINGTON - Sometimes the urge to do good leads to unintended complications.

The American Medical Association, which is helping to lead a fast-growing nationwide movement to shun tobacco investments, was dismayed to learn recently that its employees' 401(k) stock investment program offered a mutual fund holding shares in the tobacco industry.

But AMA officials quickly discovered they could not easily drop the mutual fund in its 401(k) program. Federal rules say that fund trustees considering adding or removing funds from a retirement program essentially can examine only the funds' financial performance, not whether they invest in unfashionable causes.

The episode illustrates the quirky complexities confronting shareholders seeking "socially responsible" investments. That strategy's advocates - who avoid buying shares in tobacco companies, defense contractors, corporate polluters and the like - say such snafus are inevitable for a movement growing as quickly as theirs.

Some other investors have questioned the AMA's and its allies' judgment in determining which firms' shares should be avoided because of their tobacco connections.

Sara Lee Corp. - maker of hot sticky buns, Kiwi shoe polish and Playtex brassieres - is one of 17 companies on the AMA's banned list because its Dutch subsidiary, Douwe Egberts, sells pipe tobacco. The unit accounts for 2 percent of Sara Lee's sales. The AMA, in an initiative begun in April, recommends selling not only Sara Lee but any mutual fund with Sara Lee stock. At the same time, only a hard-line

JOHN MINTZ

few "socially responsible" investment advisers counsel dropping the shares of P.H. Glatfelter Co., a company that makes cigarette paper, and filter manufacturer American Filtrona Corp. Neither is on the AMA's list of firms whose stock is to be sold off.

The AMA's reasoning on why tobacco stocks should be sold is because cigarettes are "a ruinous and enslaving product that has brought misery, disease, anguish and death." About 8 million people worldwide die each year from tobacco-related diseases.

In April, the AMA asked health organizations not to invest in tobacco. Besides drawing up a list of tobacco companies, it also disclosed the 1,400 mutual funds that it wants investors to avoid because they own shares in those tobacco companies.

It wasn't until after it launched its initiative that AMA executives were embarrassed to realize that Benchmark Equity Index, one of the mutual funds in their 401(k) program, owned shares in Philip Morris Cos.

Index funds such as Benchmark are a headache for social-investing activists. In recent years, index funds such as Benchmark and the Vanguard Equity Index 500 have been among the most popular mutual funds around. Index funds mimic the investments and performance of market gauges such as the Standard & Poor's 500-stock index or the Dow Jones industrial average. To eliminate a stock in the index would be to upend the mimicking strategy.

So AMA officials would have preferred simply to eliminate Benchmark Equity Index from the menu of five funds offered by its

401(k) plan. But their lawyers warned that administrators of 401(k) and other retirement plans are obligated by federal labor law to act only in employees' "fiduciary" interests. Most plan trustees can't add and drop mutual funds simply because they don't like a fund's political flavor.

The social-investing world also is concerned about a pending lawsuit against the Evangelical Lutheran Church by some of its ministers. The plaintiffs said the church's \$3.5 billion pension fund gave up \$227 million in returns by selling stocks in companies with business in South Africa between 1988 and 1993.

The AMA arrived at what is emerging as the social-investing community's favored solution in such cases - it kept the Benchmark index fund in the 401(k) plan but added another index fund that avoids tobacco stocks.

The AMA plan's trustees chose the Domini Social Equity Index Fund, which avoids investment in tobacco, gambling and defense firms. It wasn't a hard case to make on shareholder return grounds. This year, the fund has returned 24%, compared with Vanguard 500's 25% - so the fund's convictions have hardly hurt shareholders.

Working for a public health organization, "our employees express a great deal of vocal support for adding Domini," said AMA spokesman Dan Maier.

Kinder, Lydenberg, Domini & Co., a Boston corporate accountability research firm, advises plan trustees on how to avoid lawsuits when changing a plan's menu. In the end, though, its literature reminds trustees why they're taking all the trouble: "Tobacco is addictive, and kills smokers." (The Washington Post)

Syria had 2.4 million tourists in 1996

DAMASCUS (Reuters) - More than 2.4 million Arab and Western tourists visited Syria in 1996, spending around \$1 billion, Syrian tourism minister said.

Danhu Daoud said that Syria expected the number of tourists per year to reach three million in the near future and that it has started setting up plans and agreements to develop the industry.

"The number of tourists and visitors by the end of this year will be around 2.43 million which is a good increase of around 8 percent from the 1995 figure of 2.25 million," Daoud said.

"Depending on this rate we expect the number of tourists to

increase to 3 million in the near future."

Daoud said Syria was seeking to improve tourism through investment projects, festivals, exhibitions and bilateral cooperation agreements with Arab and foreign countries.

Syria signed in 1996 a tourism cooperation agreement with Algeria and an agreement with the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) to prepare a study for a national plan to develop tourism until the year 2015.

JICA official in Damascus,

Anwar Bariz, said Syria has "good touristic qualities...and the Middle East is heading towards an era of economic development so tourism should be improved to be a strong support to the countries' economic development."

Statistics of the tourism ministry showed that tourists from Arab Gulf countries, Lebanon and Jordan were over 1.4 million this year. Tourists from France, Germany, Italy, Russia, Britain, Iran, Turkey and the United States were over 500,000 for the same period.

Leumi in talks on sale of Ihud Insurance

GALIT LIPKIS BECK

BANK Leumi is in final negotiations with several groups in an attempt to sell 75 percent of Ihud Insurance Agencies by the end of 1996, a Bank Leumi spokesperson confirmed yesterday.

According to the Banking Law, banks have until the end of 1996 to reduce to 25% their holdings in any non-financial company.

Bank Leumi is seriously negotiating with several companies engaged in the insurance field including the Shlomo Eliyahu Group and Migdal, a Bank Leumi subsidiary engaged in the insurance field.

Eliyahu said the purchase of Ihud would increase Eliyahu Insurance's activities to business customers. Eliyahu is also the owner of a 20% share in Phoenix and controls 40% of Union Bank, which was purchased from Bank Leumi and the government four years ago. Ihud was founded in 1952 and deals in insurance brokerage. The firm specializes in handling busi-

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Target Mutual Fund for Foreign Residents. Date: 24.12.96. Purchase Price: 158.31. Redemption Price: 155.96.

Prime Mutual Fund for Foreign Residents. Date: 24.12.96. Purchase Price: 114.17. Redemption Price: 112.68.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Industrial companies' earnings fell 14.6% in first nine months: Industrial firms reported a drop in earnings in the first nine months of the year compared to the same period last year, the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange (TASE) reported yesterday. The operating return-on-equity of the 189 firms that adjust their financial statements in accordance with the Consumer Price Index fell 14.6% in the first nine months of the year compared to 19.1% in the same period last year and 16.4% in all of 1995. Firms engaged in the metal and petrochemicals fields suffered the sharpest drop in earnings.

The TASE economics department also forecasted industrial firms will complete 1996 with much lower earnings than in 1995, based on the assumption that fourth quarter earnings in 1996 will be lower than those reported in the same quarter last year. Galit Lipkis Beck

Harel publishes tender offer for 10% of Sahar: The Harel Hamishmar insurance company has published a tender offer to purchase 10% of Sahar Insurance's shares at NIS 9.8 per share. The offer is part of Harel's plans to turn Sahar into a wholly owned subsidiary. If the company receives offers for the purchase of only 6% of Sahar's shares, Harel intends to appeal to the court to force the remaining shareholders to sell their shares.

Harel is offering to purchase the shares at a price 9.4% above the market value on the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange Monday, the last day of trading before publication of the tender offer. In the last six months, the shares have traded at an average price of NIS 8.07. Shareholders can submit offers until 12 January, 1997. Galit Lipkis Beck

Dor Energy Ltd. has signed a series of contracts worth an aggregate \$50 million to supply gasoline to 35 airlines during 1997. This follows the opening of the domestic market to competition.

Among the company's customers are El Al Israel Airlines, Lufthansa German Airlines, Tower Air, Air France, SAS, Olympic Airways, Air 2000, Britannia, Air Tours and Sabena. David Harris

The Israel Electric Corporation has no operation plan to set up a nuclear power station, company chairman Gad Ya'acobi told representatives of 33 environmental groups on Tuesday. IEC's search for an appropriate site and keeping updated on world developments in nuclear energy keep the option open for some time in the future, so that if and when the government gives its blessing to such a scheme, the company would be prepared, he added. David Harris

Industry and Trade Ministry director general Yehoshua Gleitman has appointed Consumer Products Administration director Yoram Levi to investigate taxation levels on imported ice cream. Gleitman is uncertain that the \$0.55 levy on every kilogram (which contains more than 7 percent dairy fat) should be enforced, two years after the measure was introduced.

Ice cream imports totalled \$1.35 million in 1994, \$4.03m. in 1995 and \$5.3m. in the first 11 months this year. David Harris

Knesset Finance Committee members Michael Kleiner (Gesher) and Avi Yehzekel (Labor) have agreed to head the "Produced in Israel" lobby. After holding talks with members of the Manufacturers Association, the two said they will lead the fight against what the Association calls "discrimination" against Israeli-made goods. The Association vehemently opposes the government's ongoing attempt to expose the economy to foreign competition. David Harris

The United Kibbutz Movement is to hold its third annual conference at Kibbutz Dorot from tomorrow through Shabbat. Topics under the spotlight will include the kibbutz in the next millennium, the possible changes in kibbutz life and whether there is a need to change the economic structure. Guests at the event include Labor Party Chairman Shimon Peres. David Harris

ISRAELI MONEY MARKETS. Table with columns for Currency (deposit rate), 3 MONTHS, 6 MONTHS, 12 MONTHS. Includes sub-tables for Patah (foreign currency deposit rates) and Shekel Foreign Exchange Rates* (24.12.96) with sub-tables for CHECKS AND TRANSFERS and BANKNOTES.

BEZEQ, Israel Telecommunications Corp. Ltd. R.F.I. No. 65/96/139/0. Request for information regarding Telephone Directory Services System. List of 5 requirements for information.

Key Representative Rates
US DollarNIS 3.2660
SterlingNIS 5.4066
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Cuba passes law against tougher US embargo

HAVANA (Reuters) - Cuba's National Assembly has approved legislation aimed at countering the US Helms-Burton law that toughened Washington's longstanding economic embargo against Havana.
The Law of Reaffirmation of Cuban Dignity and Sovereignty was approved late on Tuesday by parliament, which was holding a two-day session on Tuesday and yesterday. The new Cuban law declares Helms-Burton inapplicable and without value.
President Fidel Castro, attending the session, described the law as a patriotic move that would also protect and give confidence for foreign investors in Cuba.
US President Bill Clinton dropped earlier reservations and approved the Republican-sponsored Helms-Burton law in March following the downing of the previous month by Cuban fighters of two small private US planes flying near Cuba.

Swiss Army awards IAI \$115m. contract

Switzerland has awarded a \$115 million contract to Israel Aircraft Industries' Elta division for a communications intelligence system. The Elta system will enable the Swiss to detect, intercept, and analyze communication traffic. The Swiss Army will use the program as part of its modernization program.
Steve Rodan

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Maof Index
SHARES closed slightly higher yesterday, in spite of profit-taking, with traders saying the market had stabilized at current levels.

Security sources, PA unsatisfied with issuing Palestinian Police Ingram submachine guns

SECURITY sources are concerned by a plan to issue Palestinian Police Ingram submachine guns because they are highly lethal, easy to hide and have an unreliable safety catch. The Palestinian Authority is unhappy about them too, saying its police should be issued the same weapons as the IDF.
In talks yesterday, the two teams discussed weapons and the buffer zone.
They said the Ingram's only positive feature is that it can fire a distance of only 40 meters, which means settlers cannot be fired on from Palestinian-controlled territory across the buffer zone that is being planned. But its safety catch is known to slip easily and once fired it won't stop firing until it releases all 35 bullets in its gun clip, the sources said. As Palestinian policemen have been known to point their guns at soldiers in tense moments and often keep their fingers on the trigger, this could unleash a disaster. The sound of the automatic fire also could cause others to open fire in return, the sources said.
It can fire at the rate of 1,000 bullets a minute, which is effective for stopping a speeding car at short range, but is little use for precise shooting at a terrorist in a crowd.
The Ingram, often used by anti-terrorist squads and gangsters, is banned for sale in many countries.
The PA is upset that Palestinian Police and IDF soldiers in joint mobile units will not be issued the same weapons even though they are supposed to be doing the same work.
"We are asking for equivalent weapons. What they are saying is that the Palestinian Police should have Ingrams and the Israeli police should have M-16s. Where is the cooperation? You should respect the Palestinian Police, you should have confidence in them," PA cabinet secretary Ahmed Abdel-Rahman said.
Security sources say that a more effective weapon for Palestinian Police would be the manual ver-

ISRAEL DISCOUNT BANK

(Continued from Page 1) destroyed [the economy], we are fixing it.
After Netanyahu finished, a furious Shohat demanded and was given the right of response. Shohat said the prime minister's structures on his economic management were "unfounded and untrue," and the proof of this is that Netanyahu himself sings the praises of Israel's economy whenever he is overseas.
He prides himself on the strength of the economy when overseas, but within Israel he throws out empty statements that are disconnected from reality. Not a word he says is true, and his promises are not promises," Shohat said, adding that Israelis should be worried about having a prime minister with such norms of behavior.
"I'm proud to have been a minister in a government which produced such great economic achievements, and I'm ashamed of a prime minister whose promises don't even last 24 hours," he concluded.
Netanyahu then took the podium again to respond to Shohat, presenting the analogy of a factory with a top-notch work force and great products, but "just one small problem. It lacks financing -- and because of that, it folds," he said.
"The factory called the Israeli economy is superb," he concluded. "But it had terrible financing [during the past four years]."
The budget debate itself, in contrast, proceeded calmly, with speakers switching back and forth between economics and the Hebron redeployment. The government easily won the votes on the first 11 of the Economic Arrangements Bill's 36 paragraphs, after which the plenum broke off the debate until Monday. The only vote which did not follow straight party lines was a proposed amendment to

NEWS IN BRIEF

BolsWessanen buys Hillsdown unit
AMSTERDAM - Dutch food and drinks group BolsWessanen NV said Tuesday it had acquired cereals firm Barber Chestergate from Hillsdown Holdings Plc.
BolsWessanen said it would pay an undisclosed cash sum for Barber Chestergate which has annual sales worth some 30m guilders (NIS 60m) and employs 130 people.
Barber Chestergate makes breakfast cereals sold under retailers' own private labels.
BolsWessanen already owns British cereals firm Dailyceer UK and said its share of the British cereals market would rise as a result of the Barber acquisition to 12% from 9%.
Reuter

Belgian steel firm bankruptcy held off again
BRUSSELS - A Belgian commercial court Tuesday ruled against declaring whether or not Belgian steel maker Forges de Clabecq SA was bankrupt after hearing a report by two experts on the company's viability, the Belga news agency said.
Belga said the report showed that Clabecq was still viable. Reuter

Jordan Valley settlers to get disputed land

SOME 40 Jordan Valley settlers left the area called the Yugoslavian Experimental Farm in the region yesterday after receiving assurances from the Defense Ministry that within a couple of days they will receive a timetable stating when they can once again begin to work that disputed piece of land.
The IDF declared the 380-dmian plot of land a closed military area on Tuesday, and barred farmers from Moshav Masua from working there.
The Palestinians claim that the land belongs to them, since in the Oslo accord it is stipulated that all experimental farms in the territories will be handed over to the Palestinians. But Israel maintains that the area ceased being an experimental farm in 1988 when it was turned over to the World Zionist Organization's settlement division, and that in 1994 it became a part of Moshav Masua.
Despite the IDF's order declaring the area a closed military zone, this preventing work on the land, about 40 settlers went to the site with their tractors to work, where they were stopped by the IDF. Two men, including Jordan Valley Residents Committee head David Elhayani, climbed atop the water tower and refused to come down.
Elhayani was detained for questioning when he finally came off the tower after the agreement with the Defense Ministry was worked out.
Jordan Valley Regional Council Head David Levy said he was told that the decision to keep Jews from working the land was made to neutralize a potential point of Israeli-Palestinian conflict before the Hebron redeployment. The army's decision, he was told, was that a violent dispute in the Jordan Valley could spread to Hebron.
Levy rejected this argument, saying that the land clearly belongs to the moshav, and there is no reason they should be barred from working there.

National Crime Squad's new chief

Commander Moshe Mizrahi has been officially appointed as the next National Crime Squad chief, to take over from Cmdr. Yoram Rudman.
Rudman will leave in May to be the Israel police's Far East representative in Thailand.
Mizrahi, 46, is a lawyer by profession.
Mizrahi joined the police force in 1976 and has specialized in investigations and special operations, and currently heads the police college.
Previously he was the chief of the Judea, and Ayalon (South Tel Aviv) sub-districts and was Tel Aviv's Hayarkon sub-district investigations chief.
Although Mizrahi's appointment has been approved, it is not yet clear when he will replace Rudman.
(Continued from Page 1) day were reported to be serious but stable.
Levine, who spoke to reporters after visiting the two wounded soldiers, described the attack as "contemplative fighting by groups of cowards." He stressed that the Egoz unit played an important role in the war against Hizbullah. "They are in the firing line all the time and have had many successes, but also (have paid) painful prices," said Levine.
Levine was asked about the fact that ambulances were not waiting at Rambam's helicopter landing pad when the wounded arrived and that they had to be wheeled to the emergency ward on stretchers.
"The IDF and Northern Command does not have one bad word [to say] about Rambam," said Levine, adding that there was a great deal of praise for the hospital and its staff. He stressed that all incidents were examined carefully and the appropriate lessons would be learned if it was found that any mistakes did occur.

GROCERY HEBRON

(Continued from Page 1) The third issue the demonstrators were trying to highlight was how easy it is to move unnoticed in the city.
"We were able easily to slip through the security force's fingers and into the cashah, even though it was expecting some kind of action from us. Think if the roles were reversed, and it was a group of terrorists who were able to move so easily in the night," Wilder said. "That we were able to pull this off with such ease shows how effective the security forces are."
Meanwhile, the Rabbinical Forum for Eretz Yisrael once again reiterated a halachic decision it issued in 1993: it is forbidden to take part in the eviction or handing over of parts of Israel to non-Jews.
Rabbi Eliezer Waldman, dean of the hesder Yeshivat Nir in Kiryat Arba and a member of this group, told Israel Radio it is "forbidden to be a part of the abandonment of parts of Israel, and certainly Hebron. It is forbidden for anyone to be a part of this. It is forbidden for our soldiers, who obey every order, to obey this order, which is against a Torah commandment."
The organization, headed by former chief rabbi Avraham Shapira, issued a statement saying the redeployment agreement is tantamount to abandoning the settlement.
"It is unbelievable that a Jewish government will complete the work of the 1929 massacre. We warn that all those responsible for this will be remembered unfavorably forever as being able to destroy things holy to Israel, and will never be forgiven."
This rabbinical organization was not the only one to come out harshly against the agreement. The Pikuah Nefesh rabbinical group, an organization affiliated with Habad, called upon Netanyahu to resign before signing the Hebron agreement so that "he will not be the one responsible for the desecration of God's name."
Agudat Yisrael's Council of Sages called upon the prime minister "to completely cancel the dangerous decision that is liable, God forbid, to bring about bloodshed and tragedies in Hebron worse than the cruel bloodshed of 1929."
On the other side of the spectrum, Chief Rabbi Eliahu Bakshi Doron told Itim that it is forbidden for a soldier to refuse an order.
Meretz Faction head Yossi Sarid, meanwhile, called on Attorney General Michael Ben-Yair to launch a criminal investigation against Waldman for his statements. This type of call, Sarid said in a letter to Ben-Yair, endangers the existence of the IDF and can break our defensive strength. This type of call is essentially an act of betrayal against the state."
(Continued from Page 1) increase investment grants in Jerusalem. Three coalition MKs, including Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert, broke party discipline to support this proposal, but two Hadasah and two Meretz MKs joined the government to defeat it.
The only excitement was when a government-backed amendment to eliminate an extra half tax credit for married working women came up for a vote. Haim Oron (Meretz) protested that this amendment had never been discussed in the Knesset Finance Committee, and therefore the vote should be delayed until the committee met and discussed it.
Michael Eitan (Likud) responded that the amendment was submitted in his name rather than by the government, and therefore does not need to go to committee. Oron, however, cited a precedent from three years ago, when Dan Tichon (Likud) had raised a similar argument against a private amendment backed by the Labor government to equalize child allowances for Arabs and Jews. This amendment was ultimately sent to committee before being brought back for a vote, and Tichon, who is now Knesset speaker, agreed with Oron that the same should be done in this case. It was therefore decided that the Finance Committee will discuss the amendment Sunday, after it completes its voting on the 1997 budget law (this week's debate has not been on the budget itself, but rather on the accompanying Economics Arrangements Bill).
Labor and the Likud also agreed that the vote on the actual budget will take place between 3 a.m. and 6:30 a.m. on January 1. The Likud had originally wanted the votes to take place on December 31, but Labor had threatened a filibuster unless voting was postponed until the 1st, since it does not want to give the government the satisfaction of passing the budget before the end of the year.

Show how good a driver you are. No reason to cross the white line! GOOD DRIVING is a habit

SPORTS

England unable to prepare for Test

BULAWAYO (Reuter) - Overnight rain delayed England's preparations for today's second and final Test against Zimbabwe as the net facilities at Harare Sports Club were unfit for a scheduled Christmas morning net session yesterday.

Robinson's on crutches and Spurs are hobbling

SAN ANTONIO (AP) - David Robinson balanced himself on crutches in the locker room and wondered about all that had gone wrong this season.

Wingate Olympic symposium starts Saturday



WILL BE MISSED - When healthy, David Robinson is a major asset to the Spurs.

HEATHER CHAIT

DESPITE several last-minute cancellations, more than 90 visitors from abroad will attend the Second International Post-Olympic Symposium to be held this weekend at the Wingate Institute in Netanya.

The NFL coaching carousel keeps spinning

NEW YORK (AP) - Mike White joined the coaches' casualty club on Tuesday, with Wayne Fontes apparently the next to go.



LEADER PURGE - The Giants handed Dan Reeves his walking papers Monday.

NFL for the job he did as coach in Arizona. Another possibility is Dennis Green, who has told friends he'd be interested in the Raiders if his off-field problems in Minnesota force him to leave the Vikings.

Shearer returns to Blackburn as enemy

LONDON (Reuter) - Alan Shearer will not be weighed down by nostalgia when he returns to Blackburn today for the first time since his world record £15-million move to Newcastle.

Nottingham Forest caretaker player-manager Stuart Pearce's only real selection poser for the visit of defending champions Manchester United is whether on-loan Nigel Clough should be in the starting line-up.

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Are fans disappointed with Dallas? IRVING, Texas (AP) - Are Dallas Cowboys fans beginning to lash back at their wayward team? Fans may be showing their disapproval of Dallas' on- and off-field woes by taking their time buying tickets for Saturday's wild-card game against the Minnesota Vikings.

Three Maccabi Haifa players suspended. DEREK FAITAL. THE Israel Football Association's disciplinary court yesterday suspended the three Maccabi Haifa players sent off in last weekend's match against Hapoel Petah Tikva.

CRITIC'S CHOICE

DANCE

HELEN KAYE

OHAD Naharin's witty, wide-ranging and electric Anaphase danced, of course, by the Batsheva Dance Company...



A male stripper joins three war widows in 'Sex, Lies & Dinner.'

ENTERTAINMENT

HELEN KAYE

BENTE Kaban is a Norwegian Jewish actress who has made a name for herself in Yiddish theater, and with a series of one-woman plays with songs...

A male musical extravaganza of some of the most exciting performances Israel has witnessed in a long time.

CLASSICAL MUSIC

MICHAEL AJZENSTADT

EXACTLY 60 years ago, Arturo Toscanini waved his baton in Tel Aviv, and the Israeli (then Palestine) Philharmonic Orchestra played its first ever concert...

TELEVISION

SEX, Lies and Dinner, an original dramatic production for the Family Channel, candidly examines for the first time the myth of the Israeli war widow...

GILBERT and Sullivan buff are in for a real treat in the State Theatre of Victoria (Australia) production of The Pirates of Penzance...

TELEVISION

- CHANNEL 1: 6:31 News in Arabic 6:45 Exercise Hour 7:00 Good Morning Israel... CHANNEL 2: 13:00 Make A Wish 13:30 Super Duper 14:00 Echo Point 14:30 Tic Tac 15:00 The Best Soccer Video Clips...

WHERE TO GO

NOTICES in this feature are charged at NIS3.00 per line, including VAT, per month. per line of the month costs NIS25.00 plus...

JERUSALEM

Conducted Tours: HEBREW UNIVERSITY. Tours of the Mount Scopus campus, in English, daily Sun-Thur...

TEL AVIV

MUSEUM. Following the Shoah: Graffiti in Yitzhak Rabin Square; Ten years to the Ministry of Education Prize in Plastic Arts...

MIDDLE EAST TV

- 7:00 Quantum Shopping 8:00 TV Shop 14:30 The 700 Club 15:00 Larry King 16:00 Hunter 16:55 Family Challenge 17:45 Family Matters...

CABLE

- ITV 3 (33): 18:15 Yasin and Bahaya 17:15 The World of Art 18:00 Amores 19:00 News in Arabic... ETN 2 (23): 15:30 Wonder Years 16:00 A Matter of Time program for Anti-Drug Week...

SECOND SHOWING (S)

- 22:00 Laningrad Cowboys Go America (Finnish, 1989) - rock comedy about a bad Russian rock group on tour in America...

DISCOVERY (S)

- 6:00 Open University - Chemistry in Action; American Space Program 12:00 World of Geo (pt) 13:00 Visionaries (pt) 14:00 Open University (pt) 15:00 WWF East Of 23:00 NBA Game of the Week (pt) 1:00 Football World: 19:00 Football World: 19:00 Football World: 19:00 Football World...

EUROSPORT

- 9:30 Horse Racing: World Cup 10:30 World Sport 11:00 Motor Racing: Granada-Dakar Rally - roundup (pt) 12:00 Motor Racing: 24-hour race, France (pt) 13:00 World Sport 13:30 Olympic Games (pt) 14:00 Soccer: World Cup - qualifying matches roundup 15:00 Snowboard 15:30 Recreational Sport magazine 16:00 Soccer: European Championship (pt) 17:00 World Sport 23:00 Olympic Games (pt) 21:00 Extras - American Challenge games 22:00 World Sport 23:00 Recreational Sport magazine 23:00 World Sport 23:30 Olympic Games (pt) 00:00 Soccer: Goal festival 1:00 World Sport

PRIME SPORTS

- 5:30 Indian League Soccer 7:30 Motorcycle Racing: Supercross, Japan 8:30 Sports India 9:00 Cricket: India tour of S. Africa live 16:00 WWF Blast Off 17:00 NBA Game of the Week - LA Lakers vs. Phoenix Suns (pt) 19:00 Football World: 19:00 Motorcycle Racing: Supercross, Japan 21:00 World Windsurfing 21:00 Cricket: India tour of S. Africa - roundup 22:00 WWF Blast Off 23:00 NBA Game of the Week (pt) 1:00 Football World: 1:30 Tennis: Greatest Grand Slam Games of 1996 (pt) 3:30 Cricket: India tour of South Africa - roundup

RADIO

VOICE OF MUSIC

- 6:06 Morning Concert 9:05 Three Christmas carols/Jean Francois Lesueur, Oratorio for the coronation of Charles X; Beethoven: Symphony no 4; Stravinsky: Le balser de la fee (La Scala/Muti); Britten: Variations and tugs on theme of Purcell, Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra... 12:00 Noon with Gideon Hod - Israeli music and quiz 14:00 Encom: 15:00 Voice of Music magazine 16:00 Bach: Motet BWV 227; J.J. Froberger: Lamentation (1657); Haydn: String quartet op 33/5 (Mozart); Beethoven: Sonata in A for piano and cello op 69; Bartok: Contrasts for violin, clarinet and piano; Franck: String quartet in A; Schubert: Impromptu in G major for piano; Debussy: song to words by Baudelaire 18:00 New CDs - Haydn: String quartet in C op 76/3 "Emperor" (Alban Berg); Chopin: Ballade in G minor no 1 op 23, Scherzo in B flat no 2 op 31 (Shiraz); Bartok: String quartet no 4 (Julius Kappeler); Scriabin for flute and piano 19:30 Sixty years of the Israeli Philharmonic Orchestra, cond. Zubin Mehta, Daniel Barenboim, Pinchas Zukerman; soloists Isaac Stern, Shlomo Mintz, Gil Shaham, Maxim Vengerov, Yehudi Menuhin, Itzhak Perlman, Pinchas Zukerman, Ariel Shtroum, Mischa Maisky, Yefim Bronfman. Weber: Overture (cond. Barenboim); Bach: Concerto for two violins and orch; Vivaldi: Concerto for four violins and orch (Mintz, Shtroum, Bronfman, Vengerov); Mendelssohn: Brahms: Symphony no 2 (Mehta); Mozart: Serenata Notturna (Shamal/Zukerman); Halvorsen: Passacaglia and Sarabande with variations on theme by Handel (Perlman/Zukerman); Beethoven: Concerto for violin, cello and piano (Perlman, Maisky, Bronfman/Zukerman) 23:00 The Art of the Song



CRYPTIC CROSSWORD

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down sections. Includes clues like 'Flying Red Arrows, for instance, requires intelligence (11)' and 'Change the sacrificial table from the sound of it (5)'.

QUICK CROSSWORD

Quick crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down sections. Includes clues like '5 Retime (5)' and '1 Bright (5)'.

MOVIE CHANNEL (4)

- 11:30 Tender Mercies (1983) - Robert Duval won an Oscar for his role in this movie about a country singer trying to make a comeback...

CHILDREN (S)

- 6:30 Cartoons 9:00 Coura Marco 9:30

CINEMA

Cinema listings for various theaters including Apollo, RAV CHEN, Kingpin, and others. Lists movies like 'The Untouchables', 'The Untouchables', and 'The Untouchables'.

GENERAL ASSISTANCE

- EMERGENCY PHARMACIES: Jerusalem: Superpharm, Gilo Commercial Center, 676-1873; Balsam, Salah 9-Din, 627-2315; Sheva: Shalom, 628-2058...

DUTY HOSPITALS

- Jerusalem: Sha'ar Hama'ayan (Internal, ENT); Sheva Zedek (surgery, orthopedics, obstetric); Hadassah Ein Kerem (pediatrics, ophthalmology)...

POLICE

- 100 FIRE 102 FIRST AID 101 Magen David Adom In emergencies dial 101 (Hebrew) or 911 (English) in most parts of the country...

Histadrut starts limited multi-sector strike

DAVID HARRIS

ACTIVITIES at Ben-Gurion Airport, the railways, ports and Bezeq will all be severely disrupted by strike action today, following the Histadrut's decision to step up its fight against government economic policy.

Other industry sectors will be taking similar steps in the coming days in a dispute aimed to coincide with the Knesset's 1997 budget deliberations.

The details of each day's strikes will only be made public on the evening before they are due to take place.

The decision to strike was taken after meetings between Histadrut chairman Amir Peretz and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, and with Finance Minister Dan Meridor.

In a statement published after Tuesday night's marathon meeting of senior Histadrut officials, organization spokesman Yossi Leibovitch said the strike was declared amid "a crisis of confidence," because of the behavior of Netanyahu and Meridor.

"It is unacceptable that just a few hours after the meetings that the Treasury introduced new measures, and they didn't mention them at all to me," said Peretz, referring to the proposals to remove half a tax credit point from married women and that employers should pay nine rather than two days' wages to those injured at work.

While the Treasury is refusing to comment officially on the decision to strike, one source said the reason the strike is not total, but only across certain sectors, is that many of the organization's own professionals object to it. "They've got very real problems," said the source.

Netanyahu's spokesman Shai Bazak also refused to comment. Flight schedules at Ben-Gurion were remade time and again yesterday as the hour and duration of the strike changed several times, with many passengers attempting to alter their flight arrangements.

The strike by both El Al and Airports Authority staff will run from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m., Leibovitch said last night.

Those flying today are urged to call their airline to check the latest flight information. In order to avoid lengthy delays, the airport moved up many of the flights into early this morning.

There will be no freight traffic on Israel's railway system from 6 a.m. today, but the passenger timetable is unaffected.

The country's ports will also be closed from 6 a.m. Bezeq's repair, 144, 188, and 199 services will not operate after that hour.

The Tel Aviv District Labor Court yesterday issued restraining orders against the threatened strike by Bezeq workers, but it was not known last night whether the union would honor the court orders. Labor Court Judge Edna Gavrieli asked staffers to work normally.

In the event of Bezeq participation in the strike, workers' teams will ensure that telecommunications services to the security services, hospitals and Magen David Adom will function normally, and they will deal with emergencies, management said.

The Israel Manufacturers Association, the Banks Association and the Hotels Association petitioned the Tel Aviv District Labor Court against the Histadrut yesterday.

The IMA demanded the court issue an injunction against Histadrut workers to prevent them from disrupting work at industrial firms and forbid the Histadrut from staging a strike at service companies that provide essential services to the business community, including electricity, telecommunications, transport and taxation.

The Bank Association demanded the court issue an injunction against bank workers participation in the strike. The Treasury also challenged the possibility of any strike action by state employees.

Doron Tamir, head of the IMA's labor committee said the strike will greatly harm industrial firms, and goes against the collective wage agreement signed between the Histadrut and firms.

The labor relationship between the IMA and Histadrut is based on the general collective agreement which states "one side will not stage a strike against the other."

The existing system whereby employers can appeal against strike action is a direct attack on the workers' right to strike, responded Peretz during an appearance before the Knesset Labor and Social Affairs Committee.

The Histadrut issued a warning last night that the banking system will be brought to a standstill tomorrow, with many more sectors striking on Sunday and Monday, with a full general strike scheduled for Tuesday.

Galit Lipkis Beck and Judy Siegel contributed to this report.



A navy flight controller guides the new Atalef (bat) helicopter to a landing aboard a missile boat. The first two of the new generation of naval patrol helicopters are now in service. (IDF Spokesman)

Jews still villified in Egyptian, Jordanian media, despite peace

BATSHEVA TSUR

DESPITE Israel's peace treaties with Egypt and Jordan, Jews and Judaism continue to be vilified in the media in those and other Arab countries, the Institute of the World Jewish Congress states in a Policy Dispatch released in Jerusalem.

WJC Secretary-General Avi Bekor yesterday called on world Jewry to put the issue on its current agenda. "Although the press in these and other Arab countries is under a considerable degree of government control, censors have not seen fit to expunge newspapers of such material," the policy paper notes. Describing it as anti-Semitism, the paper says that "abolition of such [Nazi-like] pro-

paganda should be seen as an essential confidence-building measure in the region's quest for peace.

"Among the recurring themes in the press in these countries, both in pro-government and in opposition organs, is that Judaism is a sinister religion and that Jews are a grotesque life-form," the paper says. It adds that the Protocols of the Elders of Zion are often quoted, even in moderate countries like Morocco. Many of the graphic descriptions - such as an Israeli flag with a swastika juxtaposed with the star of David - imitate Nazi literature. "An especially despicable

charge is that the Holocaust never happened and that Jews and Israelis are the real Nazis," the paper says.

It cites examples from earlier this month in two leading establishment newspapers in Egypt - al-Ahram and al-Ghommerya - which refer to Israel as a "militaristic and Nazi violent criminal." In Jordan, "al-Sabil" wrote this month that Israel and its prime minister were "the Jewish cancer which sits on our land Palestine... and the wild Jew who continues to chop the heart of the people... and implements Nazi methods through its rabbis." In "relatively benign Morocco," the paper

says, Jews are described as "spiteful and criminal and [representing] a racist species which cannot be straight." The quotes appeared in October in the weekly, "al-Usbu."

"Although the election of Prime Minister Netanyahu has exacerbated the strain in relations... this ugly antisemitism also existed during the administration of previous Israeli governments," the paper says.

The paper concludes that "it must be made clear in no uncertain terms that Jews find this phenomenon entirely unacceptable... Such expressions of Jew-hatred call into question the [Arab leaders'] commitment to achieving peace with Israel."

American Jewry struggling to find 'comfort zone' on settlement issue

COMMENT

MARILYN HENRY / NEW YORK

WITH an ad last week in *The New York Times*, a Christian coalition tapped the touchstone of American Jewish life: Jerusalem. When the group "Churches for Middle East Peace" called for sharing Jerusalem, American Jewish groups mobilized to denounce the idea.

But when it comes to another significant issue, settlements, the American Jewish community appears to be crippled by a lack of consensus.

"The battle for Jerusalem is on," said Malcolm Hoenlein, the director of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations. The ad, he said, is part of an escalating campaign to redivide Jerusalem.

The ad was sponsored by a coalition of 15 national Christian groups and dozens of others, including the National Council of Churches, the United Methodist Church, the Unitarian Universalist Association and the

American Friends Service Committee. It did not include evangelicals, Orthodox Christians or the Catholic Church.

The groups signing the ad were a "broad swathe of mainline Protestantism in America," said David Harris, executive director of the American Jewish Committee. Many of these same groups in the past "have been pretty quick on the trigger when it comes to Israeli issues." They have never pretended to be balanced in their approach to the Middle East, Harris said.

When these groups sniff any potential weakening in support for Israel, they are energized, Harris said.

That weakened support appeared to show in the last few weeks, when President Bill Clinton took an unusual public

swing at Israeli settlements, and eight former high-level American officials wrote to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, urging him "not to take unilateral actions that would preclude a meaningful settlement and a comprehensive and lasting peace."

This appears to mean that "we are returning to a period we remember well from the 1980s, where the debate over Israeli policies becomes a matter for public space," Harris said.

But the American Jewish community seems unprepared for what awaits.

It does not make communal pronouncements without a consensus, and there is no consensus on settlements.

When a consensus is "elusive, a paralysis sets in," said Martin Raffel, associate executive vice chairman of the National Jewish

WEATHER

Jerusalem 9-18
Beersheva 9-24
Tel Aviv 12-21
Haifa 12-22
Tiberias 11-28
Atlat 9-22
Samartha 10-20
Dead Sea 12-22
East 11-24

Forecast: Partly cloudy.

AROUND THE WORLD

Location	Low	High	Wind	Cloud
Alexandria	12	18	10	Partly cloudy
Bahia	12	18	10	Partly cloudy
Bombay	12	18	10	Partly cloudy
Calcutta	12	18	10	Partly cloudy
Chennai	12	18	10	Partly cloudy
Copenhagen	12	18	10	Partly cloudy
Dubai	12	18	10	Partly cloudy
Hong Kong	12	18	10	Partly cloudy
London	12	18	10	Partly cloudy
Los Angeles	12	18	10	Partly cloudy
Madrid	12	18	10	Partly cloudy
Moscow	12	18	10	Partly cloudy
New York	12	18	10	Partly cloudy
Paris	12	18	10	Partly cloudy
Rome	12	18	10	Partly cloudy
Sydney	12	18	10	Partly cloudy
Tokyo	12	18	10	Partly cloudy
Vienna	12	18	10	Partly cloudy
Zurich	12	18	10	Partly cloudy

Winning cards

THE winning cards in yesterday's daily Chance drawing were the jack of spades, the ace of hearts, the queen of diamonds, the seven of clubs.

Russian underworld figure may lose Israeli citizenship

RAINE MARCUS

THE High Court of Justice is expected to decide this morning whether to revoke the passport of Anton Malevsky, who police allege is a Russian organized crime kingpin wanted by Moscow authorities.

Malevsky arrived here in May 1994 from Moscow. He changed his tourist status two months later and received citizenship under the Law of Return, although his mother is not Jewish. However, his grandfather was Jewish and after providing the necessary proof, Malevsky and around 10 other family members were granted citizenship here.

He lives in a luxurious penthouse in Ramat Aviv Gimmel and drives a new Mercedes. According to his lawyer Yoram Sheffel, he does not work here and is not registered as owning any company here. He owns companies abroad and "invests" his money here.

Malevsky is married to a Russian immigrant he met here and the couple has an 18-month-old daughter, born in Israel.

Malevsky, who has one ear cut off and a scar on his face that he says he received in the Russian invasion of Afghanistan, apparently financed property here that's owned by his family.

Israeli authorities claim that there is an arrest warrant in Russia for Malevsky.

Sheffel argues that since he has been living here, Malevsky has entered Russia on his Israeli passport without hindrance.

"He is not even on the so-called list of 30-odd *persona non grata* who according to police are members of the Russian mafia," said Sheffel.

Jerusalem deputy mayor may be investigated

JERUSALEM deputy mayor Haim Miller (Agudat Yisrael) may be summoned for an investigation by the National Fraud Squad following a complaint filed by MK Ran Cohen (Meretz).

Cohen filed a complaint to police over what he alleged was a misuse of public funds for Miller's personal interests. According to the complaint, Miller allegedly used NIS 4,000 from a now-defunct non-profit organization affiliated with Agudat Yisrael for his own use. The National Fraud Squad is to examine the complaint to decide if there are grounds to question Miller.

BE A WINNER!

Fill out this entry form today, return it to The Jerusalem Post and participate in our weekly raffle for valuable gift certificates from Kitan Center, Golf and Levi's stores! Every Friday in The Post, we'll announce three new prize winners: 1st Prize: NIS 700 value, 2nd Prize NIS 200 value, 3rd Prize NIS 100 value.

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THE JERUSALEM POST

Apparent contradictions in testimony at air force accident inquiry

LT-COL. A.'s evidence appears to contain discrepancies regarding the August 1992 deaths of two air force soldiers, the committee the IDF appointed to investigate the incident charged yesterday.

A. was the commander of the IAF rescue unit in which Cpl. Assaf Rosenberg and Cpl. Gil Tzuriano had served until the training accident in which a pulley cable they were climbing to a helicopter broke and they fell to their death.

The accident occurred in the first exercise that A. supervised after being appointed the unit's commander 10 weeks previously. Committee member Brig.-Gen. (res.) Nehemia Dagan, a veteran IAF helicopter pilot, presented A. with an account of the statements he made in the initial inquiry into the incident.

A. had told the committee that Rosenberg and Tzuriano had been told to climb the cable to their helicopter and then enter it, but in his earlier evidence had said they were told to climb the cable and then return to the ground without entering the helicopter.

Misunderstanding between Rosenberg and Tzuriano, the acromechanic and the pulley operator over the two soldiers' orders could explain why the cable broke.

A. responded by reiterating his statement to the committee that the two had been told to enter the helicopter.

The delay in sending in a rescue squad to save Rosenberg and Tzuriano also was discussed in the hearing.

This was the committee's first hearing that was open to Rosenberg's and Tzuriano's families and the press. (Nim)

IDF widows protest film

THE organization of soldiers' widows and orphans petitioned the High Court of Justice yesterday to block the screening of Yirmi Amir's film *Sex, Lies and Dinner* on cable television today. The petition claims that the film dishonors those killed while serving the country and their families and stigmatizes the widows by portraying them as "sex starved." The organization also wrote to the cable network, asking that it not show the film because it is liable to "bring about sexual harassment." (Nim)

Earthquake shakes Syria

TREMORS from an earthquake were felt in the North shortly after midnight on Tuesday. The earthquake's whose epicenter was in

Zadok reelected to head Press Council

HAIM Zadok was elected to a second term as head of the Israel National Federation of Journalists, the Editors Commit-